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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted to develop and implement a comprehensive assessment system in existing adult education programs. Weekly site visits were made to four programs as follows: a segment of a large adult program offering literacy, General Educational Development (GED), and specialized technical courses; a small community-based program with literacy and GED components; a small community-based program focusing on career development for women wishing to reenter the work force; and a career development program for women that provided training in computer and secretarial skills with an adjunct literacy component. Adult informal measures (AIM) were developed along with AIM development/use guidelines. Data from site observations and student and teacher interviews indicated that informal assessment and portfolio development can be useful to instructors for students at all ability levels in all types of adult education settings if learning outcomes are clearly defined before implementation of an instructional program; however, no relationship between alternative and standardized assessment measures could be validated because of inconsistent use of the measures and the small numbers of students studied. (Appended are pre- and posttest data for the programs and 13 reading, writing, and spelling AIM developed for use in peer, teacher, and self-evaluation.) (MN)

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ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT MEASURES IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

(Adult Informal Measures: AIM)

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BY

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1991

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Alternative Assessment Measures in Adult Basic Education Programs

ABSTRACT

Testing at the adult level has been criticized for many reasons, foremost, that standardized tests have been found to be inadequate for adult education environments because of technical inadequacy and irrelevance. Despite limitations, standardized testing may be acceptable as a means of satisfying accountability goals set by program funders, but remains inadequate for use as a sole means of assessing ongoing student progress. Currently, however, there is no evidence to guide practitioners relative to how they can systematically use alternative assessment procedures in their specific context.

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a comprehensive assessment system in existing adult education programs. The long range goal was to create guidelines for adult literacy providers for development of such an assessment system.

The report, therefore, discusses the processes involved in the devlopment of an assessment system at each of four project sites. The discussion begins with the nature of the instruction at each site and the identification of assessment goals. Next, discussion centers on the manner in which each assessment goal was addressed through development of customized assessment measures. Finally, field testing and implementation of the measures within the programs and evaluation of program outcomes are discussed.

Results of the study indicate that informal assessment and portfolio development can be useful to adult education instructors for students at all ability levels in all types of settings if learning outcomes are clearly defined prior to implementation of the instructional program. This type of assessment has the potential to contribute to the progress and independence of the adult learner as well as contribute to the assessment of program effectiveness. It enables the learner to acquire criteria for evaluating work which can be transferred to situations in their lives and improve literacy abilities beyond the classroom. In summary, alternative measures will enable both students and instructors to know what the instructional program is accomplishing at any given time and to make adjustments as needed.

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Alternative Assessment Measures in Adult Basic Education Programs

(Adult Informal Measures: AIM)

Introduction

Testing at the adult level has been criticized for many reasons, foremost, that standardized tests have been found to be inadequate for adult education environments because of technical inadequacy and irrelevance. Assessment tools are most effective when used in relation to the background, goals, and interests of individuals and groups, however, many of the most widely used tests are limited in their ability to assess the prior knowledge and practical experience that adults bring to the testing situation. Scores derived from these tests, therefore, may not be useful measures of what adults can do and may not be appropriate for either program development or for assessing program effectiveness. Specifically, they do not deal with the issue of context, that is, can adults handle the tasks that they need to handle for a specific job or life goal (BCEL Newsletter, 1990)?

Also of major concern in the area of adult testing in education programs is the use of a single standardized measure as a means of assessing overall program effectiveness. Although a test may examine what an individual learned over a period of time, the test used many not be a reliable indicator of what a particular program has actually accomplished since tests are not necessarily linked to the curriculum being used and individuals may have learned skills/knowledge not tested by that specific test (BCEL Newsletter, 1990; Frederiksen & Collins, 1989; Nitko, 1989). An additional concern arises because there is nothing built into the testing to indicate prior knowledge. Therefore, learning may have been acquired elsewhere and test scores may not accurately reflect information acquired from the program being evaluated.

Despite limitations, standardized testing may be acceptable as a means of satisfying accountability goals set by program funders, but it remains inadequate for use as a sole means of assessment of ongoing student progress. Assessment measures designed to yield information about classroom instruction need to be sensitive to short-term change in student knowledge and provide meaningful feedback to both students and instructors (Airasian, 1989; Shepard, 1989). These types of assessment measures, to be of true value, need to be a direct outgrowth of instructional goals, provide detailed feedback relative to these goals, and incorporate tasks which have instructional value within and of themselves. Although these types of tests are less reliable (using a statistical yardstick) than standardized tests, they can be useful as adjuncts when evaluating ongoing student progress (Cole, 1990; Nickerson, 1989). They serve as accurate reflections of ongoing student achievement relative to a specific domain of knowledge targeted by individual instructors.

Current assessment experts point to the fact that assessment is much more than testing and that a variety of measures can serve as indicators of achievement: interviews, interactive readings, portfolios of student writing, instructor/peer observation, task simulations, and performance demonstrations (BCEL Newsletter, 1990; Stiggins, 1990). Information collected in a variety of ways over a period of time can provide a clearer picture of what has actually been achieved as a result of classroom instruction. At the present time, however, there is no evidence to guide practitioners relative to how they can systematically use alternative assessment procedures in their specific context. Although assessment is an important part of adult basic education programs, most instructors have little or no training in or understanding of it. Daily, instructors are making judgments about their students' achievement, progress, and placement through use of standardized test scores, but

frequently lack knowledge of how to evaluate the impact of instructional treatments on the day-to-day progress of their students (Stiggins, 1990).

Objectives

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a comprehensive assessment system in existing adult education programs. The long range goal was to create guidelines for adult literacy providers for development of such an assessment system. The specific objectives were:

1. To identify instructional activities, goals, and curricula at selected adult education sites;
2. To design and implement (at each site) an assessment system that included standardized and alternative measures;
3. To document ongoing implementation of assessment measures; and
4. To analyze the utility and validity of a comprehensive assessment system in measuring student achievement

The report, therefore, discusses the processes involved in the development of an assessment system at each of four project sites. The discussion begins with the nature of the instruction at each site and the identification of assessment goals. Next, the manner in which each assessment goal was addressed, through the development of customized assessment measures, is addressed. Finally, actual field testing of the measures, implementation within the instructional program, and evaluation of program outcomes are discussed.

Project Overview

Four programs (five instructors) participated throughout the course of the study. Programs were chosen because they offered group instruction and diversity in instructional content and student population. In this way the viability of

developing and using ongoing assessment measures could be observed in several types of adult education settings.

Each program site was visited on a weekly basis by the project coordinator and two of the sites were also visited weekly by the project consultant. Therefore, development of assessment instruments, discussion of implementation, and monitoring of implementation was ongoing and collaborative throughout the project.

Discussion which follows describes each program, discusses curricula and identified assessment goals, development and field testing of instruments, and their integration into instructional programs. Figure 1 gives an overall breakdown of program characteristics with regard to: admission type (open-ended/closed), attendance (consistent/sporadic), range in class size, clarity of curricular goals, and the degree to which each program was able to implement informal assessment.

Program Descriptions

Program A was a segment of a large adult program in which literacy (low to higher level), GED, and specialized technical courses were offered. Enrollment in this program was open to those wishing to improve their literacy skills, complete their GED, and/or develop some specific technical skills. At this site, two instructor participants were involved; one instructor focusing primarily on students with lower level literacy skills and the other on students with a broader range of abilities including higher level literacy skills and GED preparation. Because this program functioned under an open entry/open exit policy, student population was fluid and class composition and attendance variable from day to day. (see Figure 1) Given these constraints, each instructor chose five students, with fairly regular attendance, to participate in this project. Overall classroom attendance fluctuated weekly from a high of 15 students to a low of one or two.

Program B was a small community-based program which had both a literacy component, taught by volunteer tutors, and group instruction focused on GED preparation. This program also functioned through an open entry/open exit enrollment policy, so student make-up and attendance varied continuously. (see Figure 1) Generally attendance and numbers of students were greater just prior to the offering of the GED exam and then dropped off drastically until new enrollees wishing to prepare for the next exam appeared. Thirteen students were participating in the program when the project began. Throughout the project, however, class size fluctuated (decreasing to as few as two people).

Program C, a small community -based program funded by a large non-profit organization, focused on career development for women wishing to reenter the workforce. Students were carefully screened prior to entry and 15-25 were selected for each 10-week cycle. Those completing one cycle were generally not permitted to attend a second. During the course of the project, two complete cycles were completed. Twenty students were in the class during Cycle 1 and 16 during Cycle 2.

Program D, also a career development program for women, provided specific training in computer and secretarial skills with an adjunct literacy component. This was a 32-week competency-based program which culminated in immediate job placement for some of the women. Eleven students were in this program at the inception of this project, but class size rose to sixteen.

Identifying Instructional Goals and Assessment Needs

The process for initiating development of each assessment program began with several meetings to clarify instructional goals, relate them to actual classroom instruction, and determine instructional areas in which shortterm assessment would be both beneficial and easily integrated into classroom routines. Weekly meetings were scheduled between the project coordinator and instructors and the

Program	Type 1=Open-ended 2=Closed	Attendance 1= Sporadic 2= Consistent	Range in Class Size (November to June)	Curric. Clarity 1= Unclear 2= Very clear	Deg. of Imple. 1=little to none 2=some 3=full/1-2 meas
A	1	1	2-15	1	1
B	1	1	2-13	2	2
C	2	2	16-20	2	3
D	2	2	11-16	2	2

Figure 1: Program Descriptions

following information emerged by site. Figure 2 provides a time line that illustrates the development and implementation of the assessment program at each site.

Program A - Curricular areas, identified by the two instructors in this program as being central to their instruction, were reading comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and writing. After some discussion, one of the instructors identified improvement of writing skills as a primary instructional goal, whereas the other instructor targeted reading fluency and reading comprehension (narrative, expository, and poetry).

Program B - GED preparation was identified as the sole focus of this instructor's instruction, so curricular areas identified as important were reading comprehension and writing (math is also part of the instructional program). After a great deal of thought, this instructor targeted development of a systematic strategy for answering multiple choice comprehension questions (like those encountered in the GED exam) as the primary instructional and assessment concern.

Program C - Since this program is for women, it addressed issues specifically affecting women such as low self-esteem and their entry or reentry into the job market. Although career development was the overall goal, much of classroom time was spent on upgrading reading, writing, and spelling skills. There was a range of literacy skills among these women, but they generally read at or above the eighth grade level (as measured on the TABE). Program goals identified by the instructor included reading, writing, spelling, and job development skills. Specific areas targeted by the instructor as central to the instructional program were spelling and writing.

Program D - This program focused on providing students with specific literacy and work-related skills which would enable them to get off public assistance and then enter the workforce. The program ran from November until June, women were prescreened prior to entry, and class size was limited to 22.

Activity	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
6						Program C	Program C	Program C	Program C	Program C
5			Program C	Program C	Program C					
4		Program C		Program C Program D	Program C Program D	Program B Program D	Program A Program B Program D	Program A Program B Program D	Program A Program B Program D	Program B
3		Program C	Program C Program D	Program A Program B	Program A Program B	Program A				
2		Program A Program B Program C Program D	Program A Program B							
1	Program A Program B Program C Program D									

Figure 2: Timeline of Development of Project Assessment Progams

KEY

1 = Identification of curricular goals
2 = Identification of assessment needs
3 = Initial development of assessment instrument(s)
4 = Testing of instrument(s) with ongoing development
5 = Full implementation of one instrument
6 = Implementation of more than one instrument

Instructional foci for the literacy component of the program were identified by the instructor as grammar, business writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Grammar and business writing were identified as those to be addressed indepth throughout the course. Most women in this program were also reading at or above the eighth grade level (as measured on the TABE).

Once it was clear to both instructors and project personnel that assessment goals (through identification of primary instructional goals) had been established, development of instruments began. This collaborative process is discussed in detail in the section which follows.

Development of Adult Informal Measures (AIM)

Introduction. Informal evaluation occurs regularly in adult education classrooms through student/instructor interaction, instructor observation, periodic progress checks, and regular feedback given to students in response to daily work. What is oftentimes missing in these informal evaluations is, first, a systematic means of reflecting upon what constitutes demonstrable progress for individual students and, second, predetermined criteria for judging progress. However, if learning criteria are clearly defined and adhered to, students can begin to internalize them and use them for self-evaluation. Unfortunately, students who do not internalize these criteria may maintain their lifelong dependence upon the instructor for validation of progress.

The premise behind the assessment instruments developed in this project was to design a means of educating adult learners to work in partnership with their instructors and peers to assess their own learning and progress. To do this, it was necessary to collaboratively come to an agreement with each classroom instructor concerning criteria students needed to acquire in order to evaluate learning in a specified instructional area (eg. what criteria would be used to determine Student A's level of proficiency in writing?)

Each participant program addressed assessment issues from its own perspective, so, although assessment instruments had similarities, each instructor was encouraged to make adaptations to suit program needs. Although each program used a standardized test measure, they often were used only upon entrance into the program for placement and, given the high attrition rate in some of the programs, were never used for posttesting. To provide consistent information about student performance across programs, every student was given the ALERT (Bean, et al., 1989), a standardized literacy screening instrument developed at the University of Pittsburgh and normed on adults in the Pittsburgh area, at the beginning of the project.

The ALERT reading test is a maze comprehension task in which three word choices are provided for each deleted word. Students are given two minutes in which to complete the task. The scores reported, by program, indicate the range in the number of correct words chosen as well as the mean score. Note the wide range of reading abilities instructors are asked to address within the confines of one class. (see Figure 3) For example, in Program B the range of scores on the ALERT pretest was from 0-32 correct with a mean score of 17 meaning that the majority of the class was comprised of low to mid level readers with several in the higher range.

For the writing assessment, students are given a topic and asked to think about it for one minute and to write for three minutes. The focus is on fluency (number of words generated) rather than on mechanics. Again, from looking at the wide range in the number of words generated, one can infer the difficulties facing instructors in formulating a writing program. (see Figure 3; Appendixes A-D)

The math section on the ALERT involves completion of as many computational problems involving basic math functions in a two minute period. Although math scores are noted in appendixes A-D, only Program A actually taught math to the students, so reading and writing will be the focus of further discussion.

ALERT Scores

	# of Students	Rdg. Range	Mean	Math Range	Mean	Writ. Range	Mean
Program A	10	1-20	9	7-52	23	15-90	54
Program B	13	0-32	17	10-63	31	0-83	54
Program C Cycle 1	20	7-32	18	14-65	32	23-80	55
Program C Cycle 2	16	4-32	18	8-46	27	27-69	51
Program D	11	14-35	28	27-72	47	37-95	72

Figure 3: ALERT Pretest Information

Key

Reading: 10 & below - Needs Assistance
11-21 - Possible Assistance
22 & Above -No Assistance needed

Math: 22 & Above - Needs Assistance
23-48 - Possible Assistance
49 & Above - No Assistance needed

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Along with the range of abilities facing instructors is the difficulty with maintaining consistent attendance. Programs are asked to measure their effectiveness through administration of one standardized posttest. If attendance is low when posttesting is scheduled to occur, program effectiveness is determined through a low percentage of the student population. (see Appendices A-E)

In the section which follows, the continuing process of developing and testing the utility of informal assessment instruments as an adjunct to existing testing is discussed, as well as, their degree of integration into the instructional program. Each program's story is addressed individually to provide a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses of ongoing assessment in different types of adult education settings.

Program A. Testing in this program consisted of a standardized measure (Gates McGinitie) used for program placement, determination of student progress, and documentation of program effectiveness. Every student entering this program was administered the test for placement purposes and readministered the same standardized test on a monthly basis to determine progress. Progress was defined as moving to the next level on the standardized test, but individual gains created by specific instructional input were much more difficult to define. Because the test was also used as a means of placement, there was constant movement within instructional groups and neither instructors nor students were able to feel membership in a class for any length of time. This constant movement created problems for the instructors because they were never able to formulate longterm goals for a group of students constantly in flux. Instruction, therefore, largely consisted of random writing and reading activities with many workbooks and worksheets available at all times. It was difficult to get any sense of a coherent instructional program. Perhaps because of this lack of a sense of belonging, attendance was low and fluctuated daily further complicating the development of a

coherent instructional program. It was in this environment that the process of developing informal assessment instruments began.

It quickly became apparent that each instructor could reasonably be expected to use only one type of assessment (eg. writing), find a means of integrating it into the instructional program, and then move to another area. One instructor chose to develop measures for writing assessment while the other chose to begin with a reading fluency measure and then expand to encompass reading comprehension.

The initial task in each instructional area was to help the instructors reflect upon criteria they felt would be useful in demonstrating progress to them and to their students. The process was collaborative (the instructor, the project coordinator, and a consultant) and took several months of formulating and reformulating evaluation criteria.

What evolved in the area of writing was a series of writing measures that progressed in a developmental sequence to encompass all ability levels. The measures began with a self-evaluation of writing fluency (the student reflected upon whether enough writing was generated to cover the topic) (see Appendix F), moved to a series of five more specific evaluation criteria for self, peer, and instructor evaluation (focusing on content rather than mechanics and usage) with the opportunity for formulating ways to improve and rewrite (see Appendices G and H). The final assessment measure increased the number of evaluation criteria and added evaluation of spelling, mechanics, and usage and provided for increased self, peer, and instructor recommendations for improvement (see Appendices I, J, and K). At each level, opportunities were provided for all evaluation tools to include items which assessed effective performance and to identify areas for improvement (see Appendix G).

In the areas of reading fluency and comprehension, a structured set of instructional strategy worksheets was developed to accompany evaluation criteria.

(see Appendixes L & M) The link between instruction and assessment was critical because students were at many levels in reading comprehension and in many different reading materials and, therefore, needed to have a means of functioning both independently and as a group. For reading fluency, students were paired with partners in the hopes of maintaining continuity between readings and developing a commitment between partners. For comprehension, evaluation was individualized because of the wide range of abilities and because of the daily fluctuations in attendance. Student interview sheets were developed to be used by the instructor after something had been read and then the student was to be asked to do either an oral or written retell of the reading to be rated by the instructor on an evaluation scale. (see Appendixes N & O)

Program B. Standardized testing (TABE) was used for placement in this program. The instructor who participated instructed students in GED preparation only, so GED practice tests were used as a primary indicator of student progress.

Although attendance and class size fluctuated regularly, class membership was more clearly felt by students because everyone entered with a common goal and exited when the goal was achieved (the GED exam was passed). From the instructor's point of view, class attendance created a challenge but instructional goals always remained clear and consistent so it was a matter of placing new students into the established routine.

Developing assessment measures which would provide the instructor with information about student progress above and beyond that obtained from drills with simulated GED test materials and GED practice tests was a challenge. It took several months of reflection and discussion to pinpoint evaluation criteria which would provide meaningful information to enhance instruction. The instructor finally articulated two distinct needs which had to be addressed prior to designing assessment measures. First, the instructor requested that we develop a systematic

instructional framework for reading and comprehending narrative and expository text. (see Appendix L for one narrative framework) Second, we needed to develop an instructional framework for answering different types of multiple choice questions (factual, inferential, application). Finally, evaluation criteria were developed which were congruent with the goals established in the instructional frameworks developed.

More specifically, for assessment of question-answering ability, students were trained to first identify the type of question being asked (literal, inferential, application) and then directed to use strategies to answer them. Specific instruments were developed to quantify progress in this area making it obvious to the instructor at which level of question-answering ability each student needed additional practice. (see Appendix P)

As with Program A, inconsistent attendance limited field testing efforts and, therefore, integration into the instructional program. Another factor of note in this program was that this instructor met with a great deal of success in preparing students for taking and passing the GED exam, so there was initially not a perceived need for shortterm assessment measures beyond the practice tests already used. Most of our time, therefore, was spent in creation of instructional frameworks, because this instructor did perceive a need for developing instructional strategies which would yield consistent outcome results for his students. He was interested, specifically, in teaching strategies for both narrative and expository text and methods for answering multiple choice questions. Most of the time was spent in developing and testing these strategies, therefore, and little time was left for actual use of assessment measures designed to evaluate progress.

Program C. This program used a standardized test (ALERT), for screening purposes, prior to entering the program. Information from this screening targeted people for more indepth diagnostic evaluation. It is uncertain how the information

was used, however, because posttesting was not done and everyone was placed into the same instructional program regardless of test results.

During initial discussions regarding assessment measures which would be of help to the instructor, it was determined that students needed to improve their spelling and writing skills in preparation for the job market. The instructor opted to begin the informal assessment with a spelling measure, so we developed a measure which combined peer strategies for working with spelling words with a means for monitoring progress (see Appendix Q).

Next, this instructor began to use the writing instruments developed for one of the other programs and adapted them to meet this program's needs. Since the students were all able to generate something in writing, we omitted the lowest level of evaluation and began with self-evaluation of content criteria (see Appendix G). The instructor divided students into writing teams and for each written paper they first used the assessment instrument to evaluate their own writing and then subjected the paper to peer-evaluation (sometimes a single peer, sometimes the entire team of up to five people) (see Appendix H). Prior to instructor evaluation, the instructor asked students to use the information from the two prior evaluations (self and peer) to rewrite their papers. The papers were then collected and evaluated by the instructor who offered suggestions for further rewriting.

We were able to follow this instructor through two complete cycles of the instructional program. Attendance was consistently high, instructor expectations were high, program goals were clear, and student goals were addressed, as evidenced by adaptations made in the instructional program during each cycle. Each successive cycle showed evidence of more and more responsibility for evaluation of progress being transferred to the students who appeared to appreciate the opportunity to work together to improve their writing skills. Internalization of evaluation criteria became evident as students continued to rewrite pieces of writing beyond what was

expected of them by the instructor. They also evidenced the ability to choose among several pieces of their own writing and determine the best piece, using criteria which they had acquired during the assessment process. (see Appendix R)

By the beginning of the second cycle of this program assessment measures were fully integrated into the instructional program, and both the instructor and the students found the measures to be useful in improving writing. Each week of the program students were assigned a writing topic and assessment measures were used daily until the paper was ready to be turned in. Portfolios were developed for each student and after three writing assignments, students went to their portfolios and retrieved what they believed to be their best paper and conferenced with the instructor.

Program D. Testing used in this program consisted of a standardized test (TABE) given for placement purposes. Student progress was monitored throughout the program through predetermined competencies. Program goals, instructor goals, and student goals were highly congruent because of these competencies. Development of assessment measures began slowly because the instructor was new to the program and felt uncomfortable with initiating evaluation procedures for which the students would assume responsibility. He did, however, assist in developing measures for evaluation of writing of business letters, outlines for research documents, and to assess usage and mechanics. The program goal was to develop competencies in the students which would provide skill levels adequate for immediate entre into secretarial positions.

Although this instructor was clear as to what he wished to evaluate, the assessment procedures were, as previously stated, not fully implemented. The instructor was adept at giving frequent, individualized feedback to students on everything written, so he felt that both he and the students knew how they were progressing without documenting it and accumulating work portfolios. Interviews

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with students revealed that they appreciated the instructor feedback they received but also liked having the opportunity to engage in self-evaluation of written work and some were open to sharing their work with a peer. A final instructor interview also revealed that he found the element of self-evaluation important to student progress and to his own evaluation of their progress. He concluded that if he taught the class again he would make an effort to integrate ongoing assessment into his classroom repertoire. He saw the value but felt that learning to teach the course had been his priority so that the issue of assessment had to be secondary this first time around.

Discussion

The idea of ongoing assessment of shortterm progress and use of portfolios for systematic record keeping of development is intuitively logical and seemingly simple, but in reality it is a labor intensive activity requiring some sophisticated training (BCEL, 1990). A new system of evaluation is needed for adult learners so that they can learn the independence of self-evaluation and so determination of progress can become collaborative (adult to adult) rather than imposed (instructor/child).

Work on this study revealed that these premises are indeed accurate but, for this type of assessment to work, many variables need to be thoughtfully addressed and extensive support needs to be made available in the development of and initial implementation stages of such an effort. Merely accumulating work in a folder without criteria for evaluation of progress offers little assistance to the adult learner or to the instructor. Adult students often enter education programs not knowing what constitutes "good" reading and writing behaviors. To acquire this understanding, they need to do more than accumulate work in a folder. Rather, they need to learn to use an established set of criteria against which to evaluate their own progress.

Despite the understanding which evolved of what it takes to develop and implement a useful assessment program, the job remained a challenge throughout the course of the study. Through student and instructor interviews some of the factors contributing to this challenge were identified and are discussed below.

Problems Encountered Which Hindered Informal Assessment. Initial encounters with instructors revealed that they were all dissatisfied with standardized tests. First, they felt that the tests did not give them meaningful information about their students and, second, they were uneasy about using them as measures of program effectiveness because they were unclear as to whether they actually indicated what students learned from their programs. Instructors, however, were uniformly wary of informal assessment feeling that because of the nature of adult education programs (inconsistent attendance and wide ranges of ability levels) ongoing assessment would be difficult to use and would add time consuming work when time was a limitation. All instructor participants did, however, invest time and effort into developing instruments which were a direct outgrowth of what they perceived to be their instructional programs. For some, developing the instruments helped them consolidate educational goals and helped them more clearly determine the instructional needs of their students. This insight, however, did not in the course of the study translate into actual use of assessment in the programs. Most often, time was spent in development of the instruments rather than in field testing and integration into the instructional program. Instructor interviews and longterm observation by project personnel revealed several factors which may have contributed to difficulty in using the measures which were developed. Among these were: 1) **Student factors**: lack of consistent attendance among designated student participants and a wide range of ability levels in one class; 2) **Teacher factors**: lack of models and/or training for addressing the variety of student needs in one class, lack of instructor knowledge of strategies for implementing an

instructional program, and lack of clarity on how to make assessment an outgrowth of instruction rather than something done separately from instruction; and 3) **Program factors:** lack of well defined instructional programs at some sites and too much time in which instruction ceased so standardized testing could be conducted.

Validation of Informal Assessment. Given the inconsistent use of alternative and standardized assessment measures across programs and the small numbers of students, we were unable to validate empirically any relationship between the two types of measures. Content validity of the alternative measures was high, however, because every one was an outgrowth of the reading and/or writing curriculum of the designated program. The resulting progress, because of the high content validity of the measures, was revealed in Program C in which the measures were fully integrated into the writing program. In this program, for example, a relationship was found between the gain in the number of words generated on the writing subtest of the ALERT (see Appendix D) and on improved performance on writing scales used in the classroom. Student numbers, however, were insufficient to conduct statistical analyses. Student and instructor interviews in this program revealed that perceived progress achieved throughout the cycle was consistent with progress on the ALERT. Further, students from this program explicitly stated that use of the writing assessment instruments helped them acquire self-evaluation criteria which, in turn, created self-confidence about their ability to write well on-the-job and in their personal lives. They reported applying the knowledge gained through use of these measures to edit written work at home.

Conclusions

The current use and misuse of standardized test scores by adult education programs for curriculum development and/or assessment of program effectiveness creates a need for programs to learn to rethink the concept of testing and assessment. Assessment cannot be viewed solely as a means of documenting gain in a grade

equivalent score within a designated instructional period to demonstrate program effectiveness. Rather, the view of assessment needs to be broadened to include measurement of incremental progress along a continuum of predetermined curricular goals unique to each program. In this way, assessment becomes a natural outgrowth of classroom instruction.

Results of this study indicate that informal assessment and portfolio development can be useful to instructors for students at all ability levels in all types of adult education settings if learning outcomes are clearly defined prior to implementation of an instructional program. This type of assessment has the potential to contribute to the progress and independence of the adult learner as well as contribute to assessment of program effectiveness. It enables the learner to acquire criteria for evaluating work which can be transferred to situations in their lives and improve literacy abilities beyond the classroom.

In conclusion, several characteristics surfaced which enabled adult education instructors to successfully use informal assessment and to make it an integral part of an instructional program. First was the clarity with which program goals were articulated by program coordinators to instructors and, in turn, the clarity with which the instructors were able to use these goals to formulate an instructional program directed towards specific needs dictated by the student population. It became apparent that once program goals were clear to **everyone**, the task of "thinking aloud" to formulate evaluation criteria flowed naturally.

Second, was the cohesiveness of the class structure. Those programs with clearly defined beginnings and endings seemed to encourage more goal orientation among students and fostered stronger interpersonal relationships. These relationships generated a sense of trust between the students and the instructor and among the students themselves. Students, therefore, were much more amenable to putting themselves in vulnerable positions such as peer evaluation of work,

because they felt their own progress was of interest not only to them but to their fellow students as well. They also exhibited an openness about sharing their work (to the entire class) in the hopes of helping themselves as well as fellow classmates. These students felt that by reading papers written by their peers they were able to acquire new perspectives on their own writing. Observation revealed that in these classrooms students began to feel they could independently identify work that was good versus work that still needed improvement. They were then able to take the initiative to make needed improvements and feel pride in the end product.

However, although open entry/open exit programs posed problems which were difficult for both students and instructors to overcome, the clear delineation of instructional goals and clear conceptualization of how to achieve these goals still enabled the instructor to integrate some informal assessment into the program. If the program's mission was congruent with the students' goals, the class pulled together regardless of the structure. It was undoubtedly disruptive when too many new students would appear and/or disappear in a given week, but it was not impossible to successfully use informal assessment once it became an integral part of instruction.

Third, endpoint behaviors which were clear to both instructors and students created an easier environment for both development of and integration of assessment instruments. Knowledge of this information from the start provided useful and informative feedback to both instructors and students because everyone knew the criteria for defining achievement.

Finally, administrators and instructors who were able to accept that this is, by necessity, a time consuming process which needs collaboration and cooperation among professionals were better able to maintain a commitment to continually rethinking the utility of the measures they were developing. Those who were able to integrate the measures into their programs also realized that once measures were

developed, procedures needed to be established for introducing and integrating the measures into the instructional program.

Results of this study indicate that, although there is still work to be done in conceptualizing and training adult educators in the use of alternative assessment measures in their programs, it is a viable adjunct to the requisite standardized testing. Alternative measures will enable both students and instructors to know what the instructional program is accomplishing at any given time and to make adjustments as needed. Instructors can have a better sense of the knowledge the adults bring to the program and the gaps in knowledge the program can work to fill. In short, we need to develop a better understanding of how to better assess what adults bring to the instructional setting and what programs need to provide instructionally to make a difference. Well defined assessment programs offer the potential for assisting programs in making this difference.

Guidelines for Developing an Informal Assessment Program

Through ongoing contact, over the course of a year, with the five instructors in this study, procedures emerged which can serve as guidelines for others in developing an informal assessment program. (see Figure 4) Specifically, procedures are outlined below.

Developing Goals. A communication network needs to be developed between the program administrator, the instructors/tutors, and the student(s). The administrator, either unilaterally or in cooperation with instructors, needs to clearly determine what the program in a general sense hopes to help the adult learner accomplish. In other words, is the program's mission to augment general reading and writing skills so as to improve quality of life, is it geared to specific career development goals, is it geared to GED preparation, is it geared to improvement of life skills, etc.?

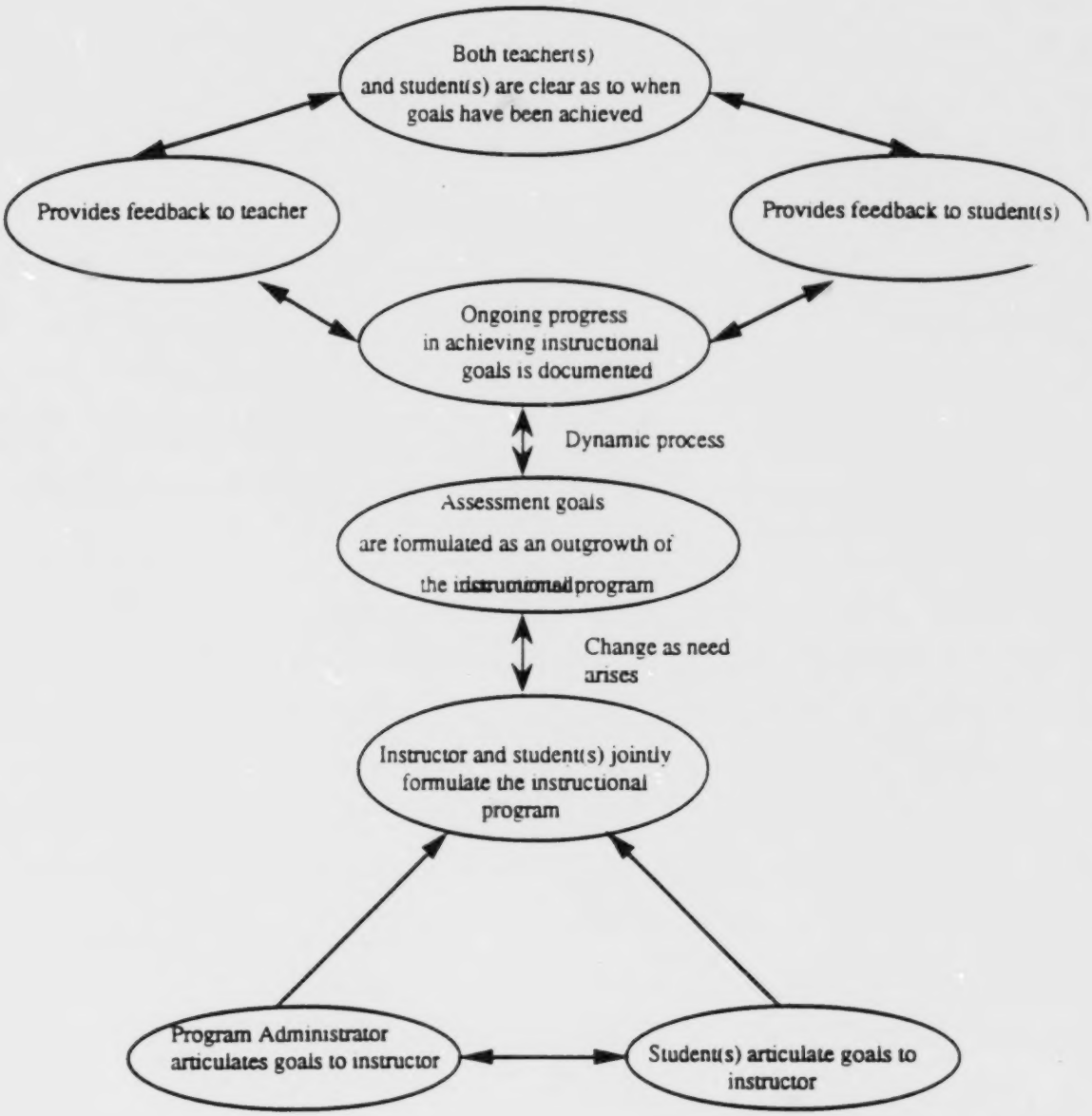
Both teacher(s) and student(s) are clear as to when goals have been achieved
Provides feedback to teacher
Provides feedback to student(s)
Ongoing progress in achieving instructional goals is documented
Dynamic process
Assessment goals are formulated as an outgrowth of the instructional program
Change as need arises
Instructor and student(s) jointly formulate the instructional program
Program Administrator articulates goals to instructor
Student(s) articulate goals to instructor

Figure 4: Guidelines for Developing an Assessment Program

Program Development. Once the program's mission is clear, it can be articulated to instructors (if they have not helped devise it) who can, in turn, develop a general instructional program with objectives, teaching strategies which will help achieve those objectives, and materials and projects which will provide a means of applying learned strategies. Instructors now have a basic means of applying learned strategies and a basic framework from which to work to jointly plan a program with students which will address their needs. This is an ongoing process which changes each year as new students come and go and needs vary, although the basic mission of the program remains intact. Questions which instructors need to answer are: What do you ultimately want to see your students doing (in reading, writing, etc.) as a result of your instruction? What kinds of improvements do you hope to see when the students are about to exit your program? What do your students want to be able to do, and how will you address these goals in your instructional program? How will your students know when they have achieved their goals?

Select Assessment Measures. Once the instructional program is formulated, a means of assessing whether instructional strategies are achieving proposed goals, as measured through student progress, need to be selected or developed. Adult Informal Measures (AIM), developed for this project, can be used for this purpose and adapted to meet individual program goals (these can be obtained by request from project coordinators) or instructors can develop their own. Since these measures are a natural outgrowth of instruction, the first step in selecting measures for achieving assessment goals is for instructors to list outcomes which they hope to observe as a result of instruction (making sure to integrate stated student outcomes). However, because this is a dynamic process, measures may regularly need to be modified to suit different student populations.

Procedures for Integration into the Instructional Program. After outcome criteria are identified, procedures for use of the assessment measures need to be developed. Since the goal in adult education is to instill a sense of autonomy, collaboration and peer feedback become important implementation methods. To begin this process it is recommended that: 1) **instructors choose just one assessment measure** to adapt and integrate into the instructional program, 2) **use several means of assessing its utility** such as through self, peer, and instructor evaluation, and 3) **develop a systematic means of recordkeeping** so it is easy to retrieve work samples to compare levels of progress at intervals throughout the program (AIM recordkeeping documents can be adapted for this use). Systematic recordkeeping is important so that ongoing student progress can be documented, students can learn to take some responsibility for this portion of the educational process, and both students and instructors can receive regular feedback regarding progress towards achieving goals. This information can be kept in portfolios so that it can be evaluated regularly to determine whether instructor/student goals are being achieved and/or whether adjustments in the instructional program need to be made.

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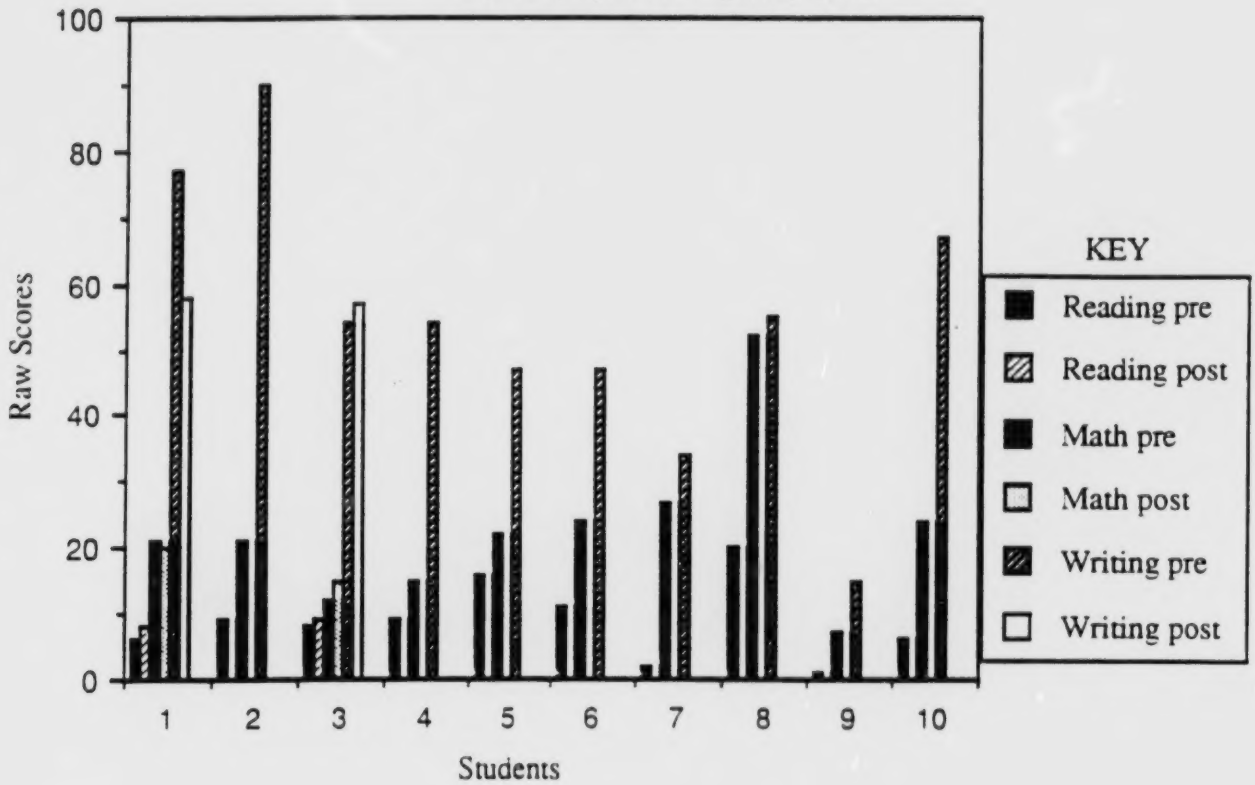
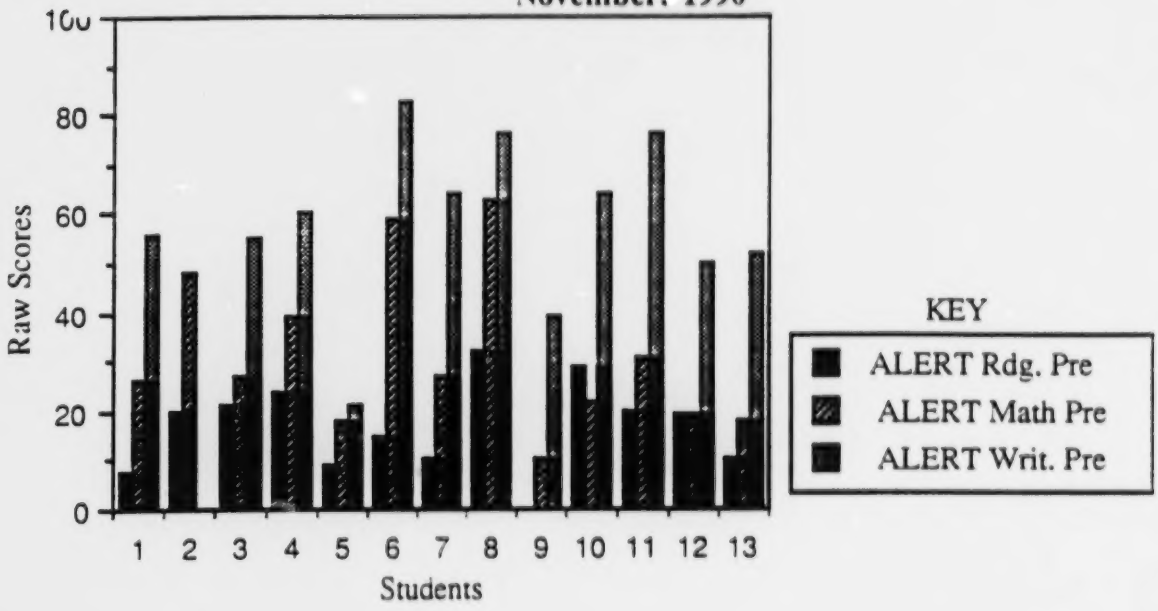
APPENDIXES

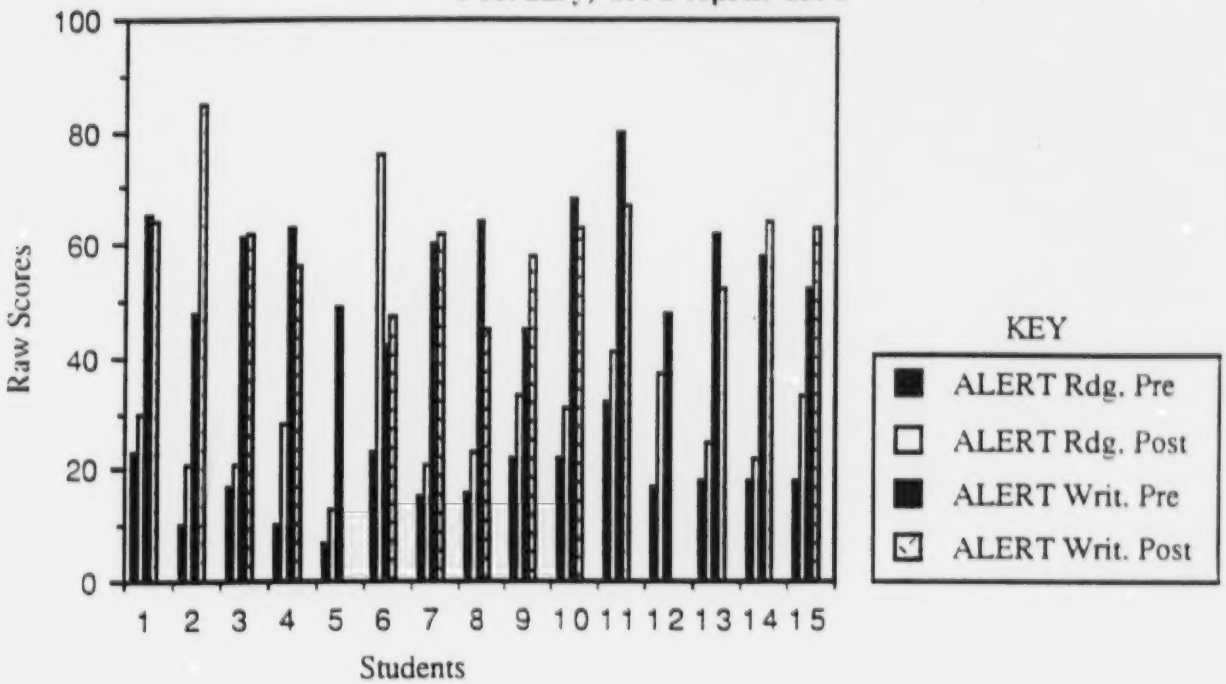
Appendix A: Program A: ALERT Data
November, 1990 - June, 1991



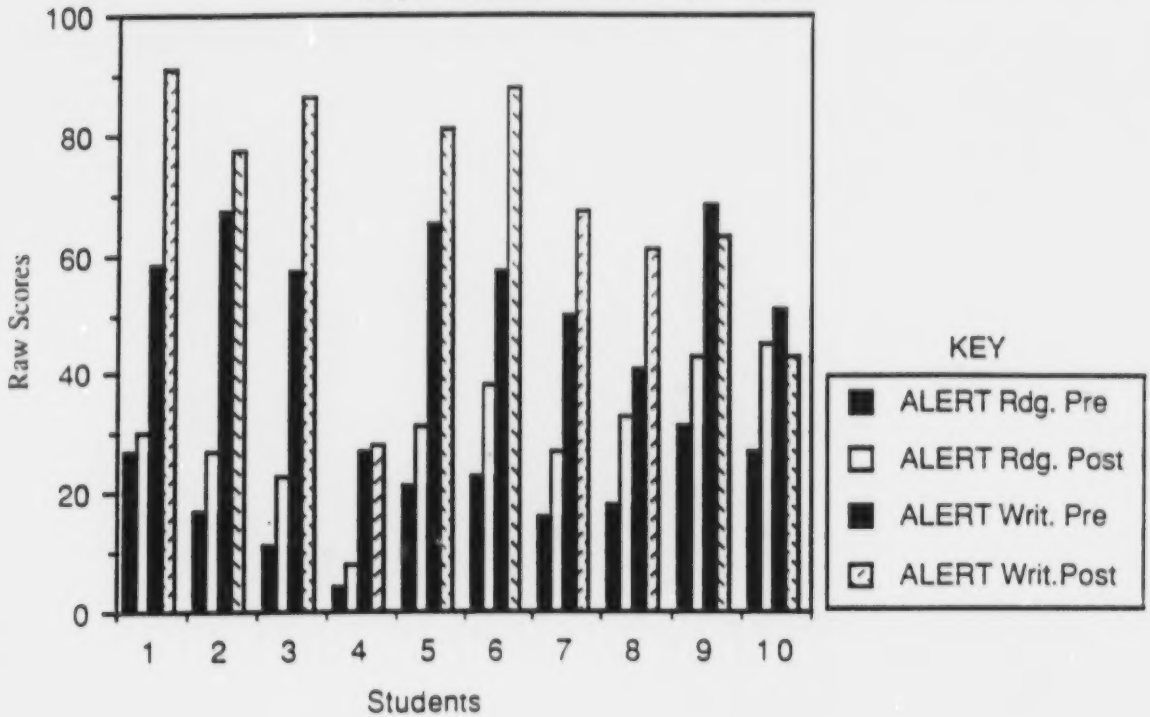
Appendix B: **Program B: ALERT Data**
November, 1990



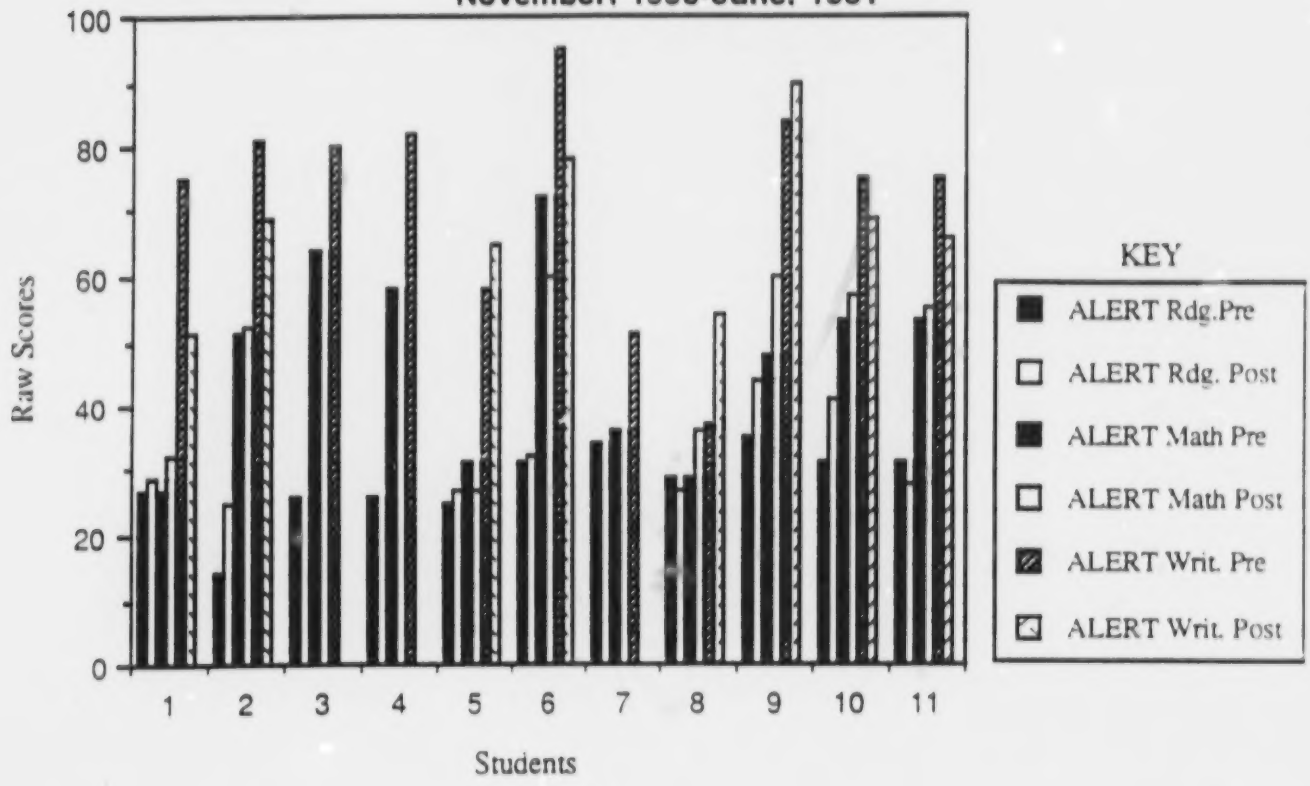
Appendix C: **Program C: Cycle 1 ALERT**
February, 1991-April. 1991



Appendix D: Program C: Cycle 2 ALERT
May, 1991-June, 1991 (6 weeks)



Appendix E: Program D ALERT Data
November, 1990-June, 1991



Appendix F

AIM: Writing I: Fluency

Writer's Name_____
Date_____
Topic_____

Directions:

CIRCLE THE **ONE NUMBER** WHICH BEST DESCRIBES HOW WELL YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO SAY DOWN ON PAPER.

1 - I had trouble saying much of anything about this topic

2 - I got stuck or I ran out of things to say about this topic

3 - I said almost everything I wanted to say about the topic

4 - I said everything I wanted to say about the topic

5 - I said everything I wanted to say about the topic, and I remembered that this may be read by someone else

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

Appendix G

AIM: Writing II: Self Evaluation

Writer _____
Topic _____

Date_____ **Self Rating:** **Total Points** _____

Points: 0= No 1= Some of the Time 2=Most of the time 3= Yes

	Self Rating
1. Have I written enough about the topic?	_____
2. Do my ideas make sense so that if someone else read this paper they could easily understand it?	_____
3. Did I stick with the same topic through the entire paper?	_____
4. Can I follow the story step by step or are some of my ideas in the wrong order?	_____
5. Are all of my sentences complete thoughts?	_____
6. Have I used a variety of words or have I repeated the same words again and again?	_____
7. Did I make the paper interesting for someone who doesn't know me or anything about my topic?	_____

8. After reading your finished paper, what questions do you think someone reading it might still have because some important facts and/or details may have accidently been left out?

_____
_____
_____

List <u>one or two</u> things you would like to improve about my paper

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of: Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

Appendix H

AIM: Writing II: Peer/Teacher Evaluation

Writer_____
Peer Rater _____
Topic _____
Date_____ **Peer Rating:** Total Points _____
Date_____ **Teacher rating:** Total Points _____

Points: 0= No 1= Some of theTime 2=Most of the time 3= Yes

1. Has enough been written about the topic?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

2. Do the writer's ideas make sense so that anyone reading this paper could easily understand it?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

3. Did the writer stick with the same topic through the entire paper?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

4. Were you able to follow the story step by step or were some of the ideas in the wrong order?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

5. Were all of the sentences complete thoughts?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

6. Did the writer use a variety of words or did he/she repeat the same words again and again?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

7. Does the writer make the paper interesting for anyone reading it?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

8. After reading the paper, what questions do you think would be helpful to ask the writer so you can better understand what he/she was trying to say ?

   _____
   _____
   _____

RATER: Write <u>one or two</u> things you would like to ask the writer to improve about what he/she has written

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

Appendix I

AIM: Writing III: Peer Evaluation

0=No 1=Somewhat 2= Mostly 3= Yes

	Rating
There is enough information given in the paper so that the reader will easily understand what the writer is trying to say	_____
The writer sticks with one topic throughout the entire paper	_____
Ideas are well organized because they are written in a logical, easy-to follow sequence	_____
Statements are supported by facts and/or details and are not just left to stand alone	_____
Sentences are easy to understand because they are complete ideas	_____
Sentences are punctuated with the appropriate end punctuation (periods,question marks, exclamation points)	_____
For every new idea, there is a new paragraph	_____
Each paragraph contains only ideas which relate to the other ideas within that same paragraph	_____
Sentences are made interesting by varying their length and sometimes combining them to form more complex sentences	_____
Instead of repeating the same words over and over, different vocabulary is used to make a piece of writing sound more interesting	_____
Appropriate internal punctuation is used throughout the written piece (commasand semicolons)	_____
Possessives and contractions are punctuated appropriately	_____
Capital letters are used where they are supposed to be used (at the beginning of all sentences, at the beginning of names, etc.)	_____

After looking at evaluation scores, here are one or two areas which need improvement.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Marcia Bagamery)

Appendix J

AIM: Writing III: Self-Evaluation

Writer's Name _____
Date _____
Topic _____

Directions: After writing your paper, read it over to yourself. After you have thought about what you have written, fill in the information below.

WRITER

Here are some things I like about my paper.

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____
4. _____
   _____

Here are some things I would like to improve.

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____
4. _____
   _____

Now take some time to rewrite your paper, specifically, trying to improve the things you listed above. After it is rewritten, ask a fellow student to read it and comment on it.

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of: Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

Appendix K

AIM: Writing III: Peer Evaluation

Writer's Name _____
Date _____
Topic _____
Peer Reader's Name _____

Directions: After reading your classmate's paper, make some recommendations to help him/her to further improve it.

PEER READER

Here are some things I like about your paper.

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____
4. _____
   _____

Here are some things I would like to see you improve.

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____
4. _____
   _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

Appendix L

AIM: Reading I: Understanding Fiction

Student's Name _____
Book Title, page # _____ Date _____

Directions: Use this sheet,while you are reading (or listening), to fiction like short stories, novels, magazine articles, short reading passages, etc.). This will help you comprehend what you are reading.

I. **Before Reading,** look at the first paragraph of the story and at any pictures and make some **predictions** about what you **think** the story (book, story, article, etc.) you are about to read will be about.
I **predict** the story will be about: _____
_____
_____

II. Read the story and **after reading** (reread parts of the story whenever you need to):

a) List any of the characters that were **important to you** while you read the story. 1) _____
2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____

b) Say something about each character you listed (eg. this person was tall and evil, I didn't like him, this character reminds me of my aunt)
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4) _____

c) Circle the names of the character(s) that seemed important **to the story**.

d) Where did the story take you as a reader (place and time)? (eg. Where: a specific city like New York, a farm in Idaho, or a small town in England; When: 1920, or sometime in Spring, or during World War II)

Where _____ **When** _____

e) Was there anything about either the place or the time in the story that reminded you of something in your own life? If, yes, describe it. _____
_____

f) There's always a problem or conflict in a story. What was it in this one?
A problem or conflict in the story was_____

g) After the problem or conflict in the story, what happened? Try to list what happened in the order in which it happened (look back in the story for help).
Event 1_____
Event 2_____
Event 3_____
Event 4_____

h) How did the story end? Was the problem or conflict solved?
The story ended _____
_____

i) Did you like the way the story ended? If you didn't, how would you have liked it to end? _____
_____

j) Now go back and look at your predictions, list the ones which were correct.
_____, _____,
_____, _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix M

AIM: Reading Fluency

Book Title _____
Page read _____
Reader _____
Listener _____
***Date*:** **1st reading**_____ **#words read/2 minutes**_____
2nd reading_____ **#words read/2 minutes**_____

Rate the reader on a scale of 1-5 (1=**lowest**; 5=**highest**) - **Circle the appropriate rating.**

1) The reader knew most of the words in the passage.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

Words not known during first reading _____
_____

Words still not known during second reading _____
_____

2) The reader used punctuation while reading (paused at commas, stopped at periods, raised voice at question marks, etc.)

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

3) The reader read smoothly and rarely hesitated or stopped.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

4) The reader used expression while reading.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

Reading #1 suggestions for improvement: _____
_____
_____
_____

Reading #2 areas which showed improvement:_____
_____
_____
_____

Total Points Scored: **#1** _____ out of _____
#2 _____ out of _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix N

AIM: Reading Level I: Fiction Interview

Student _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What kind of selection did you just finish reading, for example, an adventure story, a mystery, a family story, etc. ?_____

2. Have you read any stories like this before? Yes _____ No _____

3. How would you rate the story you just read?
   Just right _____ A little hard_____ Very hard _____

4. How much did you like this story?
   A lot _____ A little_____ I hated it _____

5. If you liked the story, what were some things you liked?
   _____
   _____

6. If you hated the story, can you explain why?
   _____
   _____

7. While you were reading, if you came to places that gave you trouble what did you do?
   _____
   _____

8. Did what you tried help you? Yes ____ No____

Teacher comments: Here are some things I'd like you to try to do when you read the next story

_____

_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix O

AIM: Reading I: Narrative Retell Checklist

Student _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Program _____ Title _____

DIRECTIONS: After the student has finished reading and completing the narrative worksheet, either ask him/her to orally retell the story to you or to write what he/she remembers about the story. Instruct them to remember something from the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

0= No 1=Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= Yes

	SCORE
1. Student captured the main idea (gist) of the story	_____
2. Retelling included the major events in the story	_____
3. Retelling included only those events mentioned in the story	_____
4. Retelling demonstrated some personal involvement with the story	_____
5. Retelling was done independently (without prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to Ask the Student

1. What did you do to help yourself remember the story?

_____

_____

2. What will you try to do next time?

_____

_____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:

_____

_____

_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix P

AIM: Reading: Categorizing Multiple Choice Questions
GED Preparation

QUESTION and ANSWER PATTERNS

Type I: In the Text - Questions whose answers are stated directly in the text, usually in the same sentence or sentences close to one another

Type II: Put it Together - Questions whose answers are in the text, but not directly stated; the reader must take information from the text and put it together to formulate the answer

Type III: From Your Experience - Questions whose answer is not in the text but relates to material in the text; answers are formulated using previous experience with the topic (from personal experience, other reading, television, movies, magazine articles, newspapers, etc.) as well as information in the text.

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

Date _____ Book _____ Pg. # _____

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

(adapted from Vacca, R.T. & Vacca J.L. Content Area Reading)
Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix Q

AIM: Spelling: Instructional and Assessment Procedures

1) Compile lists of words used frequently and/or daily (take from reading and writing materials). Periodically add to the word list, using words which appear frequently in student writing

2) Choose five - ten new words per week (depending upon the skill level of the group or individual student) on which to focus for correct spelling

3) Pretest students on selected words, and have them correct their own papers. Misspelled words then become spelling goal words for the week (in addition to "words to continue to work on" for the previous week).

4) Pair students and have them work with one another to develop strategies for learning their designated words for the week. Some sample strategies are as follows: Each word is to be put on a 3"X 5" card and a strategy for spelling them can be mutually agreed upon and put on the back.
   Sample strategies:
   a) Visualize something that either looks like the word or reminds you of the word
   b) Visualize the configuration of the word
   c) Break the word into meaningful word part or chunks

5) Partners drill one another 15 minutes/day using various methods (eg. oral drill, make up exercises by leaving letters out of words that need to be filled in, lists of misspelled words which need to be corrected,etc.)

6) Weekly spelling test on both new words and targeted goal words for the week (given by partners, by teacher)

7) Keep personal record of spelling progress

8) Every third week, peers give one another a cumulative test (limit to 20 words but choose from any of the words)

9) Every four weeks hold a "spelling conference" with each student to go over spelling record and give an individualized check as to progress (an oral test of selected goal words, dictate sentences using goal words, etc.)

Individual Spelling Record

Student _____ Partner _____

Date (week of)	Pretest	Goal Words	Posttest	Words to Continue Work On

Lazar & Bean, 1991

Appendix R

AIM: Writing IV: Teacher/Self Evaluation

Student_____ Teacher_____Date_____

Student

Check one or more of the following.

This is my best paper because:

_____ I feel like I said everything I wanted to say about the topic

_____ I feel like I wrote in a clear, organized way so that anyone reading my paper would be able to understand what I was trying to say

_____ I feel like I wrote the paper in a way that would interest a reader

_____ I feel that the majority (all) of my spelling, punctuation, and grammar were correct throughout the paper

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Teacher

Check one or more of the following.

I like the paper you chose because:

_____ You covered your topic thoroughly so that I was able to understand your purpose in writing the paper

_____ You organized the information in a logical sequence, so that what you wrote was easy to understand

_____ You varied your vocabulary and sentence structure and supported your ideas so I found what you wrote to be interesting

_____ You did a good job of watching how words were spelled, of using puctuation appropriately, and of using standard grammar usage.

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: ADULT INFORMAL MEASURES

by

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1991

WRITING MEASURES

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Interview

Name _____ Date _____ Interviewer _____

1. What kinds of things have you tried to write?
   - _____ Stories
   - _____ Poems
   - _____ Directions from someone (how to do something, how to get somewhere)
   - _____ Your own experiences and opinions (diary, letters to friends)
   - _____ Something to persuade someone (letter to the editor)
   - _____ Something related to work (phone messages, memos, business letters, etc.)
   - _____ Something which explains or gives directions (recipes, how to fix something)

2. How do you usually get ideas when you are about to write?
   - _____ From my imagination
   - _____ From talking to friends, family, or classmates
   - _____ From the teacher
   - _____ From work
   - _____ From TV or movies
   - _____ From books, newspapers, magazines, stories
   - _____ From experiences you've had
   - _____ By just starting to write and hoping something will come to you as you write
   - _____ Other _____
   - _____ I have a hard time getting ideas when I want to write something

3. What kinds of things have you written about?
   - _____ An experience you've had
   - _____ Something you created from your imagination
   - _____ Something you have read
   - _____ Everyday things (a note to your child's teacher, telling someone where you went, a phone message)
   - _____ Other (explain) _____

4. When writing about a specific topic do you:
   - _____ Think about what you are going to write before you start writing
   - _____ Start writing, begin to get new ideas, and sometimes get away from the topic
   - _____ Decide what you think the teacher wants to hear and write about that
   - _____ Get stuck and usually have trouble saying everything you want to say

5. When you are given a specific topic to write about, how do you get the ideas organized so you can get started?
   - _____ By talking to someone (friends, family, classmates)
   - _____ By asking the teacher for help
   - _____ By making notes or pictures of ideas (charts, drawings, outlines) to decide what goes together
   - _____ By thinking about similar personal experiences
   - _____ I have trouble getting organized, so I usually write until I run out of ideas

6. While writing something, do you usually
   - _____ Invent spellings for words you can't spell
   - _____ Look up words in the dictionary which you're not sure of
   - _____ Ask someone to help you with spelling
   - _____ Finish writing and then get help with words you're not sure of
   - _____ Write as much as you can without worrying about spelling
   - _____ Don't use words you can't spell

7. When you're writing something and you're not sure of the correct punctuation or grammar, do you usually:

_____ Put whatever you think is correct
_____ Ask for help with anything you're not sure of
_____ Don't use anything you're not sure of
_____ Other _____

8. When you write something, who do you usually expect to read it?

_____ Teacher
_____ Friends and/or family
_____ Co-workers
_____ Boss
_____ Classmates
_____ Yourself
_____ Your children
_____ Other _____

9. When you know who will be reading what you're writing, do you:

_____ Assume the reader will be interested in and know something about your topic
_____ Make sure to give the reader enough information so he/she will understand what you've written
_____ Always keep the reader in mind while you're writing
_____ Never think about the reader and just write whatever you can

General Directions for Use of AIM: Adult Informal Measures

Introduction

"We don't teach them to write; we teach them to read." This was overheard at a recent adult literacy conference, and, unfortunately, this is still the attitude of many people involved in adult literacy. Most adult educators, however, agree that literacy instruction is most effective when taught in an integrated manner, integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Writing is a particularly important component of any literacy program, because it reinforces and supports the reading process. In addition, most adult goals include either entering the workforce and/or upgrading their skills so as to seek promotion in their current work positions. It is difficult to find any position which does not require some kind of writing (phone messages, notes, letters, lists, etc.). It is also difficult to imagine a life in which some type of writing is not required outside of work (notes to teachers, notes to children, letters to friends, recipes, etc.).

Programs for teaching writing can be rudimentary, to accommodate the needs of the learner who can barely generate a sentence, and can progress to meeting the needs of those writing creative and factual pieces with well developed paragraphs.

The assessment instruments which follow were created with this developmental sequence in mind. Although the instruments have three discernible levels, there is a great deal of overlap among them so instructors may use them in combination with one another. The assessment system, therefore, affords the instructor the flexibility to use the measures as dictated by each instructional situation, so student needs target the assessment measures which are used.

Key elements of this assessment system are: 1) It provides the instructor with simple scales which allow for ongoing evaluation of student progress; 2) It provides consistent criteria for both the instructor and student on which to evaluate different types of writing over an extended period of time; 3) It provides a means for student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation at all levels while reinforcing the longterm goal of creating self-directed learners.

AIM: Adult Informal Measures: Writing: Level I

Fluency

This level of the writing assessment system is designed to aid the beginning writer in getting his/her thoughts on paper. This may mean generating only a few words initially, but the important focus is getting the student started and breaking through the "writer's block" many adult students bring to the writing task.

By beginning in this manner, the inexperienced writer will come to realize that he/she has many worthwhile thoughts to express and that in the beginning just getting these thoughts on paper is the goal. It should be impressed upon students at this level that spelling, punctuation, and appropriate usage are secondary goals until students begin to comfortably get thoughts down on paper.

The fluency part of the assessment system will be helpful to the instructor at this point. This measure can be used collaboratively in the beginning (student/instructor) and responsibility for evaluating progress can be transferred to the student when it is evident that progress is being made. Also at this point, the idea of audience can begin to be addressed, that is, making the student aware that most things which are written are read by someone else.

It is important to note that the fluency scale, although numbered, is intended for use as a measure of progress along a continuum (1 is beginning; 4 is demonstrating marked progress in fluency) rather than as a scale for rating writing ability. At this level, students need to develop trust and feel the freedom to write whatever comes to mind. Initial topics may, therefore, best be generated by student interest. Other levels of the assessment measures allow for actual rating of what has been written.

Sample Teacher Script for Introducing the Writing Program

"We're going to begin a writing program. The most important thing right now is to feel comfortable getting thoughts down on paper. Some things which may keep writers from writing as much as they would like are: 1) Worrying about not being able to correctly spell the words they want to use, 2) Worrying about not knowing what punctuation marks to use and where to put them, and 3) Worrying about making a lot of mistakes in grammar. Today and in the days to follow, I want you to begin to write and to forget about spelling, punctuation, and grammar; just get your thoughts down on paper. Later in the writing program we will begin thinking about these things. The first step to becoming a writer is to write."

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Fluency: Level I

Writer's Name_____
Date_____
Topic_____

Directions:

CIRCLE THE **ONE NUMBER** WHICH BEST DESCRIBES HOW WELL YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO SAY DOWN ON PAPER.

1 - I had trouble saying much of anything about this topic

2 - I got stuck or I ran out of things to say about this topic

3 - I said almost everything I wanted to say about the topic

4 - I said everything I wanted to say about the topic

5 - I said everything I wanted to say about the topic, and I remembered that this may be read by someone else

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures: Writing: Level II

Additional Criteria for Evaluating Writing

This level of the writing assessment system is designed for the student who has begun to fluently put thoughts on paper. He/she consistently scores at level 4 on the Fluency Scale and has begun to take responsibility for rating him/herself. The criteria for evaluation still focus on generating thoughts and getting them down on paper, but it broadens to include the organization and completeness of what has been generated.

The idea of audience is stronger at this level and is reinforced by the introduction of peer and teacher evaluation. In addition, the concept of a sentence as a complete thought begins to emerge. Rather than labeling subjects and predicates, however, it is recommended that sentence elements be identified through speaking models. Nonsentences (phrases and fragments) can also be introduced in this way. In addition, punctuation for sentences can be pointed out (periods and question marks) but just for information purposes rather than evaluation purposes at this level.

Discussions can also begin to center around the criteria on the evaluation scales (Part II). For example it can be noted that questions 1-5 on the Part II scales address the comprehensibility of the text, whereas; questions 6 and 7 address the interest level of the text with regards to audience. Once the student(s) is obviously comfortable with the evaluation procedures, the instructor may wish to begin to photocopy papers and evaluate and rewrite them as a class (or with an individual student in a tutoring situation).

Of primary importance at this level is to help students begin to understand that the comprehensibility of what they have written is dependent upon elements of organization addressed in the assessment instrument. Therefore, important ideas which will emerge at this level are: awareness of audience, awareness of the concept of a sentence as a complete thought, development of a sense of organization, development of an understanding of content evaluation criteria, and development of the ability to begin to rethink and rewrite written material.

At this level the idea of rewriting to improve content increases in importance as writing proficiency increases. Rewrites may occur after each evaluation (self, peer, teacher), or they may occur anywhere it appears appropriate for the individual student.

Sample Script - Level II

"You've come to understand how to evaluate when you have written enough about a topic and have begun to think about the audience for whom you are writing. You are now moving to the next level in development of your writing skills, making certain that your writing is understandable and interesting to the reader. Questions which you will want to think about asking yourself at this level include the following:

- Have I written enough?
- Can what I have written be understood by anyone reading it?
- Did I stay with the same topic throughout the entire paper or did I discuss several other topics which do not belong?
- Are my ideas written in a logical order so that a reader can follow what I have written?
- Are each of the sentences that I wrote a complete thought or have I left some things out?

In addition, you will want to begin to be concerned with whether you have presented you material in a way that a reader will find to be interesting. You will want to make certain to use a variety of vocabulary words rather than relying on a few which you may repeat in every sentence. You need not use "big" words, they're not necessarily interesting and sometimes confuse the reader. You want to use words which will create images in the reader's mind which will help them understand what you have written. Aside from varying your words, you will want to pretend that the reader does not know anything about you or your topic, so make certain that you provide interesting information to help them understand what you are trying to say. After all, the purpose of writing is communication."

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Peer/Teacher Evaluation: Level II

'eer Rater _____
Topic _____
Date_____ **Peer Rating:** Total Points _____
Date_____ **Teacher rating:** Total Points _____

Points: 0= No 1= Some of theTime 2=Most of the time 3= Yes

1. Has enough been written about the topic?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

2. Do the writer's ideas make sense so that anyone reading this paper could easily understand it?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

3. Did the writer stick with the same topic throughout the entire paper?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

4. Were you able to follow the story step by step or were some of the ideas in the wrong order?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

5. Were all of the sentences complete thoughts?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

6. Did the writer use a variety of words or did he/she repeat the same words again and again?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

7. Does the writer make the paper interesting for anyone reading it?

   Peer Rating _____ **Teacher Rating** _____

8. After reading the paper, what questions do you think it would be helpful to ask the writer so you can better understand what he/she was trying to say ?

   _____
   _____
   _____

RATER: Write <u>one or two</u> things you would like to ask the writer to improve about what he/she has written

1. _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Self-Evaluation: Level II

Writer _____
Topic _____

Date_____ **Self Rating:** **Total Points** _____

Points: 0= No 1= Some of the Time 2=Most of the time 3= Yes

	Self Rating
1. Have I written enough about the topic?	_____
2. Do my ideas make sense so that if someone else read this paper they could easily understand it?	_____
3. Did I stick with the same topic throughout the entire paper?	_____
4. Can I follow the story step by step or are some of my ideas in the wrong order?	_____
5. Are all of my sentences complete thoughts?	_____
6. Have I used a variety of words or have I repeated the same words again and again?	_____
7. Did I make the paper interesting for someone who doesn't know me or anything about my topic?	_____

8. After reading your finished paper, what questions do you think someone reading it might still have because some important facts and/or details may have accidently been left out?

_____
_____
_____

List <u>one or two</u> things you would like to improve about your paper

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of: Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures: Writing: Level III

Advanced Criteria for Evaluating Writing

At this point in the writing program, students are able to determine whether they have written enough about their topic, they have a strong awareness of audience and a concern with whether what they have written is well organized so that it is understandable and is descriptive enough so as to be interesting to the reader. The concept of a sentence as a complete thought (ending with periods and question marks) is internalized.

It is time, therefore, to further broaden evaluation criteria to include spelling, punctuation, and grammar while organization and completeness continue to be stressed. Instruction may begin to focus on specific skill instruction targeted through evaluation. For example, areas for direct instruction, at this level, may include the following: sentence combining, paragraphing, use of commas and semicolons, spelling instruction on words common to the group, use of possessives and contractions, and any additional areas for which it is apparent that direct instruction is needed.

It should also be noted that the responsibility for evaluation as been transferred almost entirely to the writer and to his/her peers. Writing at this point can become collaborative among peers with the teacher serving as monitor. The audience can continue to be broadened at this level by beginning classroom publications, letter writing to businesses for job possibilities, editorials to newspapers, etc. In other words, writing can begin to become an integral part of the adult's life outside of the classroom (tutoring situation) and an actual means of communication.

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Level III

0=No 1=Somewhat 2= Mostly 3= Yes

	Rating
There is enough information given in the paper so that the reader will easily understand what the writer is trying to say	_____
The writer sticks with one topic throughout the entire paper	_____
Ideas are well organized because they are written in a logical, easy-to follow sequence	_____
Statements are supported by facts and/or details and are not just left to stand alone	_____
Sentences are easy to understand because they are complete ideas	_____
Sentences are punctuated with the appropriate end punctuation (periods,question marks, exclamation points)	_____
For every new idea, there is a new paragraph	_____
Each paragraph contains only ideas which relate to the other ideas within that same paragraph	_____
Sentences are made interesting by varying their length and sometimes combining them to form more complex sentences	_____
Instead of repeating the same words over and over, different vocabulary is used to make a piece of writing sound more interesting	_____
Appropriate internal punctuation is used throughout the written piece (commas and semicolons)	_____
Possessives and contractions are punctuated appropriately	_____
Capital letters are used where they are supposed to be used (at the beginning of all sentences, at the beginning of names, etc.)	_____

After looking at evaluation scores, here are one or two areas which need improvement.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Marcia Bagamery)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Self Evaluation: Level III

'Vriter's Name _____
Date _____
Topic _____

Directions: **After writing your paper, read it over to yourself. After you have thought about what you have written, fill in the information below.**

WRITER

Here are some things I like about my paper.

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

Here are some things I would like to improve.

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

Now take some time to rewrite your paper, specifically, trying to improve the things you listed above. After it is rewritten, ask a fellow student to read it and comment on it.

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Writing: Peer Evaluation: Level III

Writer's Name _____
Date _____
Topic _____
Peer Reader's Name _____

Directions: After reading your classmate's paper, make some recommendations to help him/her to further improve it.

PEER READER

Here are some things I <u>like</u> about your paper.

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

Here are some things I would like to see you improve.

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

Now talk to your classmate about what you have written, so that he/she can use this information to help in rewriting. After the paper is rewritten, the writer may now hand it into the teacher.

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (Developed with the assistance of: Terri Supowitz and Bob Thompson)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures: Spelling

1) Compile lists of words used frequently and/or daily (take from reading and writing materials). Periodically add to the word list, using words which appear frequently in student writing

2) Choose five - ten new words per week (depending upon the skill level of the group or individual student) on which to focus for correct spelling

3) Pretest students on selected words, and have them correct their own papers. Misspelled words then become spelling goal words for the week (in addition to "words to continue to work on" for the previous week).

4) Pair students and have them work with one another to develop strategies for learning their designated words for the week. Some sample strategies are as follows: Each word is to be put on a 3"X 5" card and a strategy for spelling them can be mutually agreed upon and put on the back.
   Sample strategies:
   a) Visualize something that either looks like the word or reminds you of the word
   b) Visualize the configuration of the word
   c) Break the word into meaningful word part or chunks

5) Partners drill one another 15 minutes/day using various methods (eg. oral drill, make up exercises by leaving letters out of words that need to be filled in, lists of misspelled words which need to be corrected,etc.)

6) Weekly spelling test on both new words and targeted goal words for the week (given by partners, by teacher)

7) Keep personal record of spelling progress

8) Every third week, peers give one another a cumulative test (limit to 20 words but choose from any of the words)

9) Every four weeks hold a "spelling conference" with each student to go over spelling record and give an individualized check as to progress (an oral test of selected goal words, dictate sentences using goal words, etc.)

Individual Spelling Record

Student _____ Partner _____

Date (week of)	Pretest	Goal Words	Posttest	Words to Continue Work On

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures

Best Paper Conference (self-evaluation over time)

At each level of the writing process, the goal to keep in mind is the continual development of self-directed learners. You will observe that self-directedness will increase over time as students begin to develop and internalize criteria for evaluating something which is well written. Along with the daily measures of ongoing progress, it is recommended that intervals be set for students to make judgements about progress over designated time periods (eg. three week periods). In this way they can better evaluate where they began, where they have progressed in a given time period, and where they would like to be in the weeks to come.

This level of evaluation is best begun when students have moved into Part III of the writing scales. At this point, students are writing with some fluency and organization. They are writing papers which evidence progress in both content and mechanics, and, therefore, have sufficient criteria within their evaluation repertoire to judge one paper against another. Since audience has been emphasized from the start, "best" papers may be those that become part of a class publication or a team writing project with other teachers (tutors).

AIM: Adult Informal Measures

Writing: Best Paper Conference

Student_____
Teacher_____ Date_____

Student
Check one or more of the following.

This is my best paper because:

_____ I feel like I said everything I wanted to say about the topic

_____ I feel like I wrote in a clear, organized way so that anyone reading my paper would be able to understand what I was trying to say

_____ I feel like I wrote the paper in a way that would interest a reader

_____ I feel that the majority (all) of my spelling, punctuation, and grammar were correct throughout the paper

Comments:

_____
_____
_____

Teacher
Check one or more of the following.

I like the paper you chose because:

_____ You covered your topic thoroughly so that I was able to understand your purpose in writing the paper

_____ You organized the information in a logical sequence, so that what you wrote was easy to understand

_____ You varied your vocabulary and sentence structure and supported your ideas so I found what you wrote to be interesting

_____ You did a good job of watching how words were spelled, of using punctuation appropriately, and of using standard grammar usage.

Comments:

_____
_____
_____

Attach this paper to your "best paper" and file it in your portfolio.

Lazar & Bean, 1991

READING MEASURES

Implementation Suggestions - General Overview

AIM: LEVEL I

At Level I, it is important that students begin to focus less on words and more on overall comprehension, so instruction can begin with practice in reading fluency (which can continue as long as it appears to benefit student reading). Using the Fluency Scale, students record the number of words read in a two minute period, but focus on improvement in reading rather than on number of words read. Variations from selection to selection may create ups and downs which will discourage students if words read/minute are the only gauge of progress. In general, however, rereading material will improve the number of words read, so students can experience improvement at each session.

In a tutoring situation, the tutor will easily fit the role of listener during fluency reading. In a class situation, however, it may be more difficult to find appropriate reading partners. Where possible, pair better readers with low level readers. Teachers may decide that several students are already fluent and fluency practice is not of value. Therefore, these people can become the listeners and peer tutors during fluency times. If possible, reading fluency should be measured twice weekly. Before beginning fluency reading, students need to see the procedures modeled and they need several practice sessions before they are left to conduct fluency readings themselves. Active teacher involvement will be necessary until students are comfortable with procedures, then teacher monitoring will suffice.

It is important that reading material used for fluency practice is easily read by the reader so fluency rather than word decoding is the focus. It is also recommended that longer pieces of text (not practice paragraphs) be used, so that each time the student reads he/she is progressing through the material. These same materials can then be used for comprehension instruction using the comprehension frameworks. By using the same materials there will be continuity of reading experiences rather than a series of segmented reading tasks. Students will also feel the accomplishment of completing entire pieces of text.

Sample Script for Beginning Reading Fluency

"Reading fluency is feeling comfortable when you read, because you don't need to stop to sound out every word and lose the meaning. To help you become more fluent, you're going to begin doing fluency drills twice a week with a partner using the same book until you finish it . When you finish one book, you'll immediately start another one, so you're always reading something while you're in this class. We'll keep watch on your progress, so we'll always know what's improving and what you still need to work on."

Reading Assessment - How to Begin

Since the overall goal in reading is active involvement in communicating and receiving ideas, assessment needs to begin with finding ways to enable the reader to communicate what he/she **can** do. This can begin with learning about the reader's interests and life experiences, because three things the adult reader brings to the reading situation, no matter how much he/she reads, is life experience, previous education, and work background. Some initial standardized testing is warranted, but it is also important to experience the student's reading using materials he/she encounters in daily life to get a sense of what the reader is bringing to the text. Therefore, the first meeting may involve talking with the student about goals and previous experiences . In addition, the **Reading Interview** can be used or adapted for use in obtaining information about how the student has approached reading in the past, what he/she knows about how well he/she already reads, and what he/she may need to learn about how to improve comprehension. In the second session, it might be enlightening to ask him/her to bring reading material he/she needs to read in daily life and ask him/her to do some oral reading and then oral retelling. This can generate informal information about fluency, word attack, organization of ideas for comprehension, knowledge of when comprehension is faulty, and fix-up strategies used when he/she becomes aware of faulty comprehension.

Assessment and Instruction

Once the instructor has some knowledge of the student(s)' abilities and needs it is easier to design an instructional program. Because instruction and assessment go hand in hand, we have developed instruments at each level which coordinate an instructional framework with assessment of progress. The instructional tasks involved for comprehension have been broken into segments which can be taught to each level of the student population. Once assessment measures indicate consistent progress at one level, students can move to the next level and continue to increase their reading proficiency. For low level students, individualized instruction may be most realistic initially, but the longterm goal is to create independent readers and learners.

Both the instructional frameworks and the assessment measures can be used for GED preparation as well. The system has been designed to be used and adapted as needed by teachers (tutors) to suit individual needs.

AIM: LEVELS I, II, AND III Comprehension Instruction and Assessment

These levels represent incremental changes in what is expected of the reader in terms of comprehension. Each level begins with the same comprehension tasks and adds a few more to increase the level of critical reading. Commensurate with these demands, the evaluation instruments increase their criteria for evaluation of comprehension.

Once the reader reaches the Level III materials, and consistently receives 3's for evaluation, he/she can be tested on the GED practice tests to determine readiness for beginning GED instruction.

GED

The instructional procedures for comprehension of text remain the same at this level, but the evaluation goals change. The measure of success at this level is passing the GED exam, therefore, evaluation of incremental progress towards this goal is necessary. The task for the GED student is to acquire more sophistication in critical reading, increase his/her general knowledge base, and develop strategies for successfully comprehending and answering multiple choice questions. Expertise in the last task is important because successful performance on the GED test is in large part dependent upon successfully answering multiple choice questions. We have, therefore, adapted a question-answering strategy developed by Richard Vacca as a means of directly instructing and evaluating progress in comprehending and answering different types of multiple choice questions (factual, inferential, application).

AIM: Adult Informal Measures: General Procedures

Introduction

In adult education programs, assessment of reading comprehension is frequently conducted by giving students small reading tasks (one or two paragraphs) and asking them to complete accompanying multiple choice questions. The inference being, the more questions answered correctly, the better the comprehension. This may hold true when used as one of several measures, but all literacy students need to begin to improve comprehension by reading and thinking about text (whole newspaper articles, whole magazine articles, whole stories, etc.) and then having a means of sharing it. Therefore, the purpose of the instructional frameworks developed for both fiction (narrative) and nonfiction (expository) is to aid reader comprehension by using accepted methods such as making predictions, eliciting prior knowledge, self-evaluation of comprehension, rereading, and retelling to name a few. Retelling was chosen for evaluation purposes because it is an effective means of helping students learn to organize information which has been read so they can begin to think critically about it.

At each level, time needs to be spent in **directly instructing** students on reading procedures connected with completing the comprehension frameworks. Students will need to be taken through the procedures step-by-step with decreased intervention as they become more proficient with the procedures. During this teacher/tutor directed learning phase, it is the time to observe and assess needs for direct instruction of reading strategies. This is important because the longterm goal is for students to learn to know when they are not comprehending and to learn fix-up strategies to help themselves.

Once you know that students can work more independently and they are using strategies to help themselves, you may want to pair or group them into small groups to work cooperatively on completing the comprehension frameworks. Stress the fact that there are not necessarily "correct" answers for each question asked, and each group may view some aspects of the selection differently.

Once students are comfortable with the procedures for reading the selection, assessment of comprehension can begin. This phase will also need to be teacher directed in the beginning and modifications can be made as needs change. For example, the after-reading interviews should give valuable information to both students and teachers but when it becomes obvious that the interviews are no longer informative, they can be discontinued. The assessment system, therefore, needs to be adapted to program need.

In a tutoring setting, the tutor will serve as interviewer/evaluator, whereas, in a classroom setting, the teacher will probably need to serve in this role in the beginning, but as evaluation criteria are internalized peer partnerships or triads can be formed. For

example, in a triad, the reader does an oral retelling while one person tapes and writes the retelling to be read later and the third person listens and evaluates the retelling (all three students must read the selection). The task can be varied throughout the course of instruction to maintain interest and to accommodate needs as comprehension improves. This flexibility can be useful in open-ended programs with an influx of new students.

Sample Script for Comprehension Procedures

"Each time you come here you'll be reading something like a story, magazine article, newspaper article, etc. As your reading gets better, what you read will get longer. While you are reading, I want you to use the worksheets to help you with comprehension. In the beginning we'll do them together; later you can do them with friends or by yourself. You can have as much help as you need. After you've had time to think about what you read, you'll meet with me (in the beginning) and tell me about it. I'll use a checklist to tell you how well you did. When you are getting ready to meet with me, make sure to think about the beginning, middle, and end of what you read. Also, try to think about what the author wanted you to get out the the selection (moral lesson, persuade you, facts). When I can see that you are improving a lot, you can choose a reading partner who will read the same things you do and you two will take turns rating one another's retellings."

GED Preparation Sample Script

In order to prepare you to take the GED exam you'll need to read lots of sample selections to improve your comprehension. You'll also have to learn ways to answer multiple choice questions. We'll start with working on comprehension and use some worksheets to help you. When we start, we'll work together on the worksheets and then you may want to work with friends in the class. I'll choose several people each time to talk to about their reading, and to listen to a summary. To make it easier for you to give a summary, after you finish reading, think about something from the beginning, middle, and end of what you read and think about why the author wrote this. While I listen, I'll be using a checklist to tell you things you did well and things you can work on. When you're doing the worksheets alone, we can start working on identifying kinds of comprehension questions and figuring out ways of answering them. You'll start to keep records of the questions you answered correctly and those you didn't, so we'll always know what you need to work on."

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading Interview

1. Before you start to read something, do you usually do anything to prepare yourself? For example, do you ever think about other things you may have read that are similar to what you are about to read, or do you think about what you already know about the topic of what you are about to read? Yes _____ No _____
(if "yes" explain)
_____
_____

2. When you read something:
_____ Do you usually know your purpose for each reading task (eg. I am reading this manual so that I can fix the washing machine, I'm reading these directions so that I don't get lost, etc.)
_____ Do you sometimes think about your purpose for reading something
_____ Do you need someone to set a purpose for you (like a teacher)
_____ Do you just begin reading and never think about a purpose?

3. When you are reading something, can you tell whether you are understanding it?
_____ Yes, always
_____ Yes, most of the time
_____ No, usually not
_____ No, never (skip #4 if you check this answer)

4. When you are reading and **are aware** that you don't understand what you're reading do you:
_____ Know of ways to help yourself
_____ Try to find ways to help yourself
_____ Reread the material
_____ Continue reading and hope it will get better
_____ Stop and ask for help
_____ Stop reading

5. When you are reading and come to a word you don't know do you:
_____ Try to sound it out
_____ Ask someone to identify it for you
_____ Try to guess what it might be using the ideas in the rest of the sentence
_____ Skip it and keep reading

6. Do you find reading to be enjoyable (either in school and/or in your life)?
_____ Yes
_____ Sometimes
_____ No, not at all

7. Do you find reading to be useful to you (either in school and/or in your life)?
_____ Yes, very useful
_____ Yes, but I'd like it to be more useful
_____ No, I rarely use reading in my life
_____ No, I never use reading in my life

8. If you read, what kinds of things do you like?
_____ Non-fiction (factual)
_____ Newspapers
_____ Magazines (including TV Guide)
_____ Mysteries
_____ Adventure stories
_____ Science Fiction
_____ Other (specify)
_____ Fiction (stories)

9. Can you name some things you would enjoy reading?

_____

_____

10. Can you name some topics that might interest you?

_____

_____

11. Can you name some things you would like to read if you could improve your reading?

_____

_____

12. Can you think of some things you know you do well when you read?

_____

_____

13. What personal goals would you like to set for improving your reading?

Goal 1 _____

Goal 2 _____

Goal 3 _____

Goal 4 _____

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Fluency

The rationale for using fluency assessment as one of the performance based measures in an adult education setting is to help students establish criteria for developing fluent reading skills to aid them in acquiring strategies for developing and practicing fluent reading. Fluency assessment can be used in both a tutoring situation in which the tutor serves as the evaluator or in a group situation in which peer evaluation would be the preferred method of implementation.

Procedures:

1) Pair students into reading partnerships

2) Give each partner a copy of the book to be read (initially choose a book at or below the student's current reading level so the student can focus on fluency rather than worrying about difficult vocabulary and/or decoding).

3) If possible, fluency reading should be scheduled two times per week using the same book until it has been completed.

4) At the end of each session, the book should be clearly marked as to where reading ended, so reading can easily begin next time (instruct students to begin at the beginning of a sentence).

5) Once the reading for the day is located, set the timer for two minutes and allow the reader time to read silently, noting areas which s/he is aware are creating difficulty.

6) Before oral reading, partners collaboratively address the problem areas identified in silent reading. Unknown words are looked up in the dictionary for pronunciation and meaning.

7) Once the reader is ready, set the timer for two minutes, and instruct the listener to listen carefully to former problem areas and think about criteria on the Oral Fluency Rating Sheet (instruct them to be active listeners).

8) After the material has been read, the listener records the number of words read in two minutes and rates the reader on the **Oral Fluency Rating Sheet.**

9) After rating, the listener writes suggestions for improvements and discusses this with the reader, allowing him/her to set goals for improvement in the next reading.

10) The reader is again given time to silently read and rehearse the passage, this time focusing on areas designated for improvement.

11) When the reader is ready, the timer is again set for two minutes and the second oral reading and rating is completed.

12) As part of the rating process this time, the listener gives the reader feedback on the areas which showed improvement.

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Fluency

Book Title _____
Page read _____
Reader _____
Listener _____
***Date*:** **1st reading**_____ **#words read/2 minutes**_____
2nd reading_____ **#words read/2 minutes**_____

Rate the reader on a scale of 1-5 (1=**lowest**; 5=**highest**) - **Circle the appropriate rating.**

1) The reader knew most of the words in the passage.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

Words not known during first reading _____
_____

Words still not known during second reading _____
_____

2) The reader used punctuation while reading (paused at commas, stopped at periods, raised voice at question marks, etc.)

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

3) The reader read smoothly and rarely hesitated or stopped.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

4) The reader used expression while reading.

1st rating 1 2 3 4 5

2nd rating 1 2 3 4 5

Reading #1 suggestions for improvement: _____
_____
_____
_____

Reading #2 areas which showed improvement:_____
_____
_____
_____

Total Points Scored: **#1** _____ out of _____
#2 _____ out of _____

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Fiction: Level I

Student's Name _____
Book Title, page # _____
Date _____

Directions: Use this sheet,while you are reading (or listening), to fiction like short stories, novels, magazine articles, short reading passages, etc.). This will help you comprehend what you are reading.

I. **Before Reading**, look at the first paragraph of the story and at any pictures and make some **predictions** about what you **think** the story (book, story, article, etc.) you are about to read will be about.
I **predict** the story will be about: _____
_____
_____

II. Read the story and **after reading** (reread parts of the story whenever you need to):

a) List any of the characters that were **important to you** while you read the story. 1) _____
2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____

b) Say something about each character you listed (eg. this person was tall and evil, I didn't like him, this character reminds me of my aunt)
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4) _____

c) Circle the names of the character(s) that seemed important **to the story**.

d) Where did the story take you as a reader (place and time)? (eg. Where: a specific city like New York, a farm in Idaho, or a small town in England; When: 1920, or sometime in Spring, or during World War II)

Where _____ **When** _____

e) Was there anything about either the place or the time in the story that reminded you of something in your own life? If, yes, describe it. _____
_____

f) There's always a problem or conflict in a story. What was the problem or conflict in this story?
A problem or conflict in the story was_____

g) After the problem or conflict in the story, what happened? Try to list what happened in the order in which it happened (look back in the story for help).
Event 1_____
Event 2_____
Event 3_____
Event 4_____

h) How did the story end? Was the problem or conflict solved?
The story ended _____
_____

i) Did you like the way the story ended? If you didn't, how would you have liked it to end? _____
_____

j) Now go back and look at your predictions, list the ones which were correct.
_____, _____,
_____, _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: After-reading Interview (Fiction): Level I

Student _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What kind of selection did you just finish reading, for example, an adventure story, a mystery, a family story, etc. ?_____

2. Have you read any stories like this before? Yes _____ No _____

3. How would you rate the story you have just read?
   Just right _____ A little hard_____ Very hard _____

4. How much did you like this story?
   A lot _____ A little _____ I hated it _____

5. If you liked the story, what were some things you liked?
   _____
   _____

6. If you hated the story, can you explain why?
   _____
   _____

7. While you were reading, if you came to places that gave you trouble what did you do?
   _____
   _____

8. Did what you tried help you? Yes ____ No____

Teacher comments: Here are some things I'd like you to try to do when you read the next story.

_____

_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Narrative Retell Checklist: Level I

Student _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Program _____ Title _____

DIRECTIONS: After the student has finished reading and completing the narrative worksheet, either ask him/her to orally retell the story to you or to write what he/she remembers about the story. Instruct them to remember something from the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

0= No 1=Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= Yes

	SCORE
1. Student captured the main idea (gist) of the story	_____
2. Retelling included the major events in the story	_____
3. Retelling included only those events mentioned in the story	_____
4. Retelling demonstrated some personal involvement with the story	_____
5. Retelling was done independently (without prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to Ask the Student

1. What did you do to help yourself remember the story?
_____
_____

2. What will you try to do next time?
_____
_____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Fiction: Level II

Student's Name _____
Book Title, page # _____
Date _____

Directions: Use this sheet,while you are reading fiction like short stories, novels, magazine articles, short reading passages, etc.).

I. **Before Reading**, look at the first paragraph and at any pictures and make some **predictions** about what you **think** the reading selection (book, story, article, etc.) will be about.
I predict the selection will be about: _____
_____
_____

II. **Read** the passage and:
a) While you are reading, put a check mark next to all of the words and/or parts of the text you **know** you don't understand. Don't stop reading, you'll work on these things later!

b) **After** you've finished reading, look up and/or ask for help with everything you checked that you think affected your comprehension while you were reading.

III. Now read the story or parts of the story which you didn't understand a **second time** making sure you are understanding it better this time. When you are finished, complete the work below:

a) Make a list of characters that seemed like real people to you. 1) _____
2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____

b) Write something to describe each character you listed (eg. this person was tall and evil, I didn't like him, she reminds me of someone I know)
1) _____ 2) _____
3) _____ 4) _____

c) Do any of these characters remind you of yourself or of anyone you know?
1) _____ reminds me of _____ because _____
_____
2) _____ reminds me of _____ because _____
_____
3) _____ reminds me of _____ because _____
_____

d) Circle the names of the characters) you think are most important **to the story**.

e) Explain why each character you chose was **important to the story**.
1) _____ 2) _____
3) _____ 4) _____

f) Describe any changes you saw in any of the characters as you read the story.
Character _____ Changes _____
Character _____ Changes _____
Character _____ Changes _____

g) Look in the story and try to find where it took place and when (eg. Where: a specific city like New York, a farm in Idaho, or a small town in England; When: 1920, or sometime in Spring, or during World War II) **Where** _____ **When** _____

h) If you believe the setting was important to the story, write a sentence explaining why.
I think the setting was important to the story because _____
_____

i) Does the setting remind you of anywhere you have been or have heard or read about?
_____
_____

j) Write something about an important conflict or problem that happened in the story.
A problem or conflict in the story was_____

k) List some events which led up to the problem or conflict.
Event 1_____
Event 2_____
Event 3_____

l) How was the problem or conflict solved? _____
_____

m) Make a list of the events which occurred after the problem or conflict was solved. Try to list them in the order in which they occurred.
Event 1_____
Event 2_____
Event 3_____
Event 4_____

n) How did you feel while you read this story (eg. happy, sad, scared, etc.)?
_____

o) Whose voice did you hear telling the story (author, a character, etc.)? _____
_____

p) Were there things that happened in the story that, if you had written it , you would have made turn out differently? Explain. _____
_____

q) Go back and look at your predictions, list the ones which were correct.
_____, _____.
_____, _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: After-reading Interview (Fiction): Level II

Student _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What kind of selection did you just finish reading, for example, an adventure story, a mystery, a family story, etc. ?_____

2. Have you read many stories like this before?
   A lot _____ Some _____ None_____

3. If you have read stories like this before, how did this one compare?
   Things which were similar _____
   Things which were different _____

4. Have you read anything else written by this author? Yes _____ No _____

5. If you have read something else written by this author, how did this one compare?
   Things which were similar _____
   Things which were different _____

6. How would you rate the story you just read?
   Just right _____ A little hard_____ Very hard _____

7. If you rated this story as hard, do you know what made it difficult for you? Explain.
   _____

8. How much did you like this story? A lot _____ A little _____ I hated it _____

9. If you liked the story, what were some things you liked?
   _____

10. If you hated the story, can you explain why?
    _____

11. While you were reading, if you came to places that gave you trouble what did you do?
    _____
    _____

12. Did what you tried help you? Yes ____ No_____

13. If what you tried did not help you, what will you try next?
    _____
    _____

Teacher: Here are some things I'd like you to try to do when you read the next story
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Narrative Retell Checklist: Level II

Student _____ Teacher _____ Date _____
Program _____ Title _____

0= No 1=Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= Yes

	SCORE
1. Retelling captured the main idea (gist) of the story	_____
2. Retelling discussed the major story events	_____
3. Retelling included only those events mentioned in the story	_____
4. Retelling identified characters in the story	_____
5. Retelling mentioned the problem or conflict in the story	_____
6. Retelling discussed the ending of the story	_____
7. Retelling indicated reader involvement with the characters and/or the story	_____
8. Retelling was done independently (without prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to Ask the Student

1. What did you organize the events in the story for the retelling?
   _____
   _____
2. What would you like to do to improve for your next retelling?
   _____
   _____
3. In what ways were you able to relate personally to this story?
   _____
   _____
4. Did personal involvement with the story and/or the characters help your comprehension?
   _____
   _____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Fiction: Level III

Student's Name _____
Book Title, page # _____
Date _____

Directions: Use this sheet while you are reading fiction. It will help you understand selections like short stories, novels, magazine articles, short reading passages, etc.

I. **Before Reading**, look at the first few paragraphs and at any pictures and make some **predictions** about what you **think** the reading selection (book, story, article, etc.) will be about.
I **predict** the selection will be about: _____
_____
_____

II. **Read** the passage and:
a) While you are reading, put a check mark above everything you **know** is affecting your understanding of the story. Don't stop reading, but use any "fix-up" strategies you know and ask for help when you need it.

b) **After** you've finished reading, look up everything you still don't understand and know is affecting your understanding of the story. If you were able to "fix up" your comprehension while you were reading, write down what you did. _____
_____
_____

III. Read anything you feel you need to a **second time.** Reread only those things which you know you did not completely comprehend the first time. Then complete the work below:

a) Make a list of characters in the story you just read. 1) _____ 2) _____
3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____

b) Write something to describe each character you listed (eg. this person was tall and evil, I didn't like him)
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4) _____ 5) _____

c) Which of the characters you listed seemed like "real people" **to you**? Explain. _____
_____

d) Circle the names of the character(s) you think were most important **to the story**.

e) Explain why each character you chose was important **to the story**.
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4) _____ 5) _____

f) Describe any changes you saw in any of the characters as you read the story.
Character _____ Changes _____
Character _____ Changes _____
Character _____ Changes _____

g) Look in the story and try to find where it took place and when (eg. Where: a specific city like New York, a farm in Idaho, or a small town in England; When: 1920, or sometime in Spring, or during World War II) **Where** _____ **When** _____

h) Is there anything about the time and/or the place in which the story took place which reminds you of a time or place in your own experience? Explain. _____
_____

i) If you believe the setting was important to the story, write a sentence explaining why.
I think the setting was important to the story because _____
_____

j) Stories all have a conflict or problem. Describe the problem or conflict in this story.
The problem or conflict in the story was_____
_____

k) List the events, in the order in which they occurred, that led up to the problem you identified.
Event 1 _____
Event 2 _____
Event 3 _____

l) How was the problem or conflict resolved? _____
_____

m) List the events, in the order in which they occurred, that happened after the conflict was resolved.
Event 1 _____
Event 2 _____
Event 3 _____

n) Write a short summary of the entire story.
The story was about _____
_____
_____
_____

o) How do you think the author wanted you to feel while you read this story (eg. happy, sad, scared, etc.)
_____

p) Whose voice did you hear in the story (author, character, etc.)? _____
_____

q) What do you think was the author's purpose in this story (what message did he/she want the reader to take away after reading the story)
The author's purpose was to _____
_____
_____

r) Go back and look at your predictions, list the ones which were correct.
_____, _____,
_____, _____

s) If the story was to continue, can you make new predictions about what might happen next?
_____
_____
_____

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: After-reading Interview (Fiction): Level III

Student _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What kind of selection did you just finish reading, for example, an adventure story, a mystery, a family story, etc. ?_____

2. Have you read many stories like this before?
   A lot _____ Some _____ None_____

3. If you have read stories like this before, how did this one compare?
   Things which were similar _____
   Things which were different _____

4. Have you read anything else written by this author? Yes _____ No _____

5. If you have read something else written by this author, how did this one compare?
   Things which were similar _____
   Things which were different _____

6. How would you rate the story you just read?
   A little hard_____ Very hard _____ Too easy _____ Just right _____

7. If you rated this story as hard, do you know what made it difficult for you? Explain.
   _____

8. How much did you like this story? A lot _____ A little_____ I hated it _____

9. If you liked the story, what were some things you liked? (plot, characters, theme)
   _____

10. Would you like to read other stories of this type? Yes _____ No _____

11. Would you like to read other stories by this author? Yes _____ No _____

12. If you hated the story, can you explain why?
    _____
    _____

13. While you were reading, if you came to places that gave you trouble what did you do?
    _____

14. Did what you tried help you? Yes ____ No_____

15. If what you tried did not help, what will you do next time? _____
    _____

16. What was the main theme or idea in the selection you just read?
    _____

17. Have you found this theme in other things you have read? Yes _____ No _____

18. Did the theme have anything to do with your personal life? Explain. _____
    _____

Teacher: Here are some things I'd like you to try to do when you read the next story
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Narrative Retell Checklist: Level III

Student _____ Teacher _____ Date _____
Program _____ Title _____

0= None 1=Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= High Degree

	SCORE
1. Retelling captured the main idea (gist) of the story	_____
2. Retelling discussed story events leading to the problem or conflict	_____
3. Retelling included only those events mentioned in the story	_____
4. Retelling identified characters important to the story	_____
5. Retelling mentioned the problem or conflict in the story	_____
6. Retelling included the events leading to resolution of the problem or conflict	_____
7. Retelling discussed resolution of the problem and ending of the story	_____
8. Retelling mentioned something relating to the theme of the story	_____
9. Retelling indicated reader involvement with the characters and/or the story	_____
10. Retelling was done independently (without prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to Ask the Student

1. What did you do to help yourself organize the story for the retelling?
   _____
   _____
2. What would you like to do to improve you next retelling?
   _____
   _____
3. In what ways were you able to relate personally to the story and/or characters?
   _____
   _____
4. In what ways were you able to relate personally to the theme of this story?
   _____
   _____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:

_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Nonfiction: Level I

Name _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Book Title, page # _____

1. **Before Reading** the selection, look at the title and at the first paragraph. Make some predictions about what you think this selection will be about.
   I predict this selection will be about: _____
   _____
   _____

2. How much do you think you already know about this topic?
   A lot _____ A little _____ Nothing _____

3. List everything you think you might already know about this topic.
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____

4. Is there anything you can think of that you would like to know about this topic?
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____

5. Read the selection and try to guess what **the author** might have wanted you to know and/or think (the author's purpose) after reading this selection.

   I think the author wanted me to know and/or think:
   Idea 1: _____
   Idea 2: _____
   Idea 3: _____
   Idea 4: _____

6. Which of the things from #4 which you thought you might **want to know** did you actually learn from reading the selection?
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____

7. List some things you **did learn** from reading the selection.
   1: _____
   2: _____
   3: _____

8. Look back at #1. Which of your original predictions about the selection were correct? List them below:
   _____
   _____
   _____

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Comprehension Questionnaire (Nonfiction): Level I

Name _____ Date _____ Title _____

DIRECTIONS:
After completing the passage, complete this form and be prepared to retell the important things you read about orally or in writing.

1. What was the topic of the selection you just read? _____

2. How many other things have you read about this same topic?
   a lot _____ some _____ not much _____ nothing _____

3. If you have already read something about this topic before, do you think what you already knew helped you understand this selection? Yes _____ No _____

4. If you haven't read anything about this topic before, did you have any knowledge about it from other sources (TV, magazines, newspaper, etc.)? Yes _____ No _____

6. While you were reading, did you find places in the selection which gave you trouble?
   Yes _____ No _____

7. If there were some places that gave you trouble, what did you do?
   _____
   _____

8. Did what you tried help you? Yes _____ No _____

9. How would you rate the selection you just read in terms of how easy or how difficult it was for you to read and understand?
   Just right ____ A little difficult _____ Very difficult _____

10. How interesting did you find this selection to be?

    Very interesting _____ Slightly interesting _____ Boring _____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Nonfiction (Expository) Retell Checklist: Level I

Name _____ Date _____
Program _____ Title _____

DIRECTIONS: After the student has finished reading and completing the nonfiction worksheet, either ask him/her to orally retell the factual information covered in the selection or to write what he/she remembers.

0=None 1= Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= High Degree

	SCORE
1. Retelling included the most important ideas from the selection	_____
2. Retelling included only those ideas found in the selection	_____
3. Retelling mentioned something about the author's purpose	_____
4. Retelling was fluent (student did not require prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to ask the Student

1. What did you do to help you remember the material for the retelling (how did you organize the information)?
   _____
   _____
2. What would you like to do for the next retelling to help you improve?
   _____
   _____
3. (If the student already knew something about the topic) How did you use what you already knew about the topic to help you with this retelling?
   _____
   _____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Nonfiction: Level II

Name _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Book Title, page # _____

1. **Before Reading** the selection, look at the title and the first paragraph. Make some predictions about what you think this selection will be about.
   I predict this selection will be about: _____
   _____

2. How much do you think you **already know** about this topic?
   A lot _____ A little _____ Nothing _____

3. List everything you think you might **already know** about this topic.
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____

4. List everything you **would like to learn** from reading this selection.
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____

5. Now, **read the whole selection. While you are reading,** try to put a check mark above everything you **know you do not understand** (words, ideas, etc.). Don't stop reading, just make a mark and keep going!

6. Now, look up everything you checked in #5 if you think it affected your understanding.

7. Read the selection or any parts of it which gave you trouble a **second time**. When you are done reading, write down what you think **the author might have wanted you to know and/or think** (author's purpose) after reading this selection.

   I think the author wanted me to know and/or think:
   Idea 1: _____
   Idea 2: _____
   Idea 3: _____
   Idea 4: _____

8. How did you know what the author's purpose was?
   _____
   _____

9. Authors usually organize material in a selection in a particular way to help the reader comprehend the material and to help the author get his/her purpose across to the reader. These are called "patterns of organization" and more than one may be used in a selection. Put a check mark next to any of the patterns you think you saw in this passage.

   ___ lists ideas, facts, or details about a main idea (no particular order)
   ___ ideas are listed in a particular order (time, series of steps, size, place, importance, etc.)
   ___ compare/contrast (similarities and differences between people, events, places, things)
   ___ cause/effect (something caused something else to happen)
   ___ problem/solution (author states a problem and possible solution)

10. Look back at #4, which of the things that you wanted to learn did you learn from reading this selection? _____
    _____

11. Look back at #1. Which of your original predictions about the selection were correct? List them below:_____

_____

12. Will the things you learned from reading this selection be of some use to you in your personal life? No use ____ Some use ____ Very useful ____

13. If you said information from the passage will be useful to you, explain in what way(s).

_____

_____

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Comprehension Questionnaire (Nonfiction): Level II

Name _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What was the topic of the selection you just read? _____

2. How many other things have you read about this same topic?
   a lot _____ some _____ not much _____ nothing _____

3. If you have already read something about this topic before, do you think what you already knew helped you understand this selection? Yes _____ No _____

4. **If you answered "yes" to #3**, can you explain how you used what you already knew about the topic to understand this selection? _____
   _____

5. **If you haven't read anything about this topic before**, did you have any knowledge about it from other sources (TV, magazines, newspaper, etc.)?
   Yes _____ No _____

6. While you were reading, were you aware of places in the selection which gave you trouble? Yes _____ No _____

7. What did you do when you came to places that gave you trouble?
   _____
   _____

8. Why do you think the author wrote this selection? _____
   _____

9. Did the author write the selection in a certain way to help you better understand his/her purpose? Explain. _____
   _____

10. How would you rate the selection you just read in terms of how easy or how difficult it was for you to read and understand?

    Just right _____ A little difficult _____ Very difficult _____

11. How interesting did you find this selection to be?

    Very interesting _____ Slightly interesting _____ Boring _____

Teacher's Comments and Recommendations:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Nonfiction (Expository) Retell Checklist: Level II

Name _____ Date _____
Program _____ Title _____

0=None 1= Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= High Degree

	SCORE
1. Retelling included the most important ideas from the selection	_____
2. Retelling included only those ideas found in the selection	_____
3. Retelling was organized so as to be understandable	_____
4. Retelling used text pattern(s) as a basis for organization	_____
5. Retelling mentioned something about the author's purpose	_____
6. Retelling was fluent (student did not require prompting)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

Questions to ask the Student

1. What did you do to help you remember the material for the retelling?
   _____
   _____

2. How did you organize the information?
   _____
   _____

3. Were you able to use knowledge of the author's purpose to help you remember the text? Explain.
   _____
   _____

4. Were you able to use knowledge of text patterns to help you remember and comprehend the text? Explain.
   _____
   _____

Teacher Comments and Recommendations: _____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Understanding Nonfiction: Level III

Student's Name _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Book Title, page # _____

1. **Before Reading** the selection, look at the title and at the first paragraph. Make some predictions about what you think this selection will be about.
   I predict this selection will be about: _____
   _____

2. How much do you think you may already know about this topic?
   A lot _____ A little _____ Nothing _____

3. If you think you may already know something, make a list of everything you think you know.
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____
   4) _____

4. Now, **read the whole selection. While you are reading,** put a check mark above anything that doesn't make sense to you (words, phrases, sections). Don't stop reading, just make a mark and keep going!

5. Look up everything you listed in #4 which affected your understanding.

6. Read the entire selection or parts of it a **second time** to make sure you understand it.

7. Think about why the author wanted to write this selection (purpose). Do you think the author's purpose was **mainly** to give you information (inform the reader) about the topic or to persuade you to have certain opinions about the topic?
   Inform _____ Persuade _____ (if you check this, skip to #11)

8. If you checked "inform," write down what you think the author might have wanted you to know after reading the selection.
   I think the author wanted me to know:
   Idea 1: _____
   Idea 2: _____
   Idea 3: _____
   Idea 4: _____

9. Write down some things from the selection that helped you answer question #8.
   _____
   _____

10. Why do you think the author might have wanted you (the reader) to know these particular things about the topic (the author's purpose)?
    _____
    _____

11. If you checked "persuade," write down what you think the author was trying to persuade you to think after reading the selection.
    I think the author wanted me to think _____
    _____
    _____

12. Write down some things from the selection that helped you answer question 11.
    _____
    _____

13. Do you find some **cause/effect relationships** (something happened and caused something else to happen) in the selection you read? Yes _____ No _____
If "yes," list as many of them as you can find below:
Cause _____ Effect _____
Cause _____ Effect _____
Cause _____ Effect _____
Cause _____ Effect _____

14. Did you find some **compare/contrast relationships** in what you read? If you did, what were they?
The author **compared** _____ with _____
The author **compared** _____ with _____
The author **contrasted** _____ with _____
The author **contrasted** _____ with _____

15. Did you find any **problem/solution relationships**? If you did, what were they?
Problem _____ Solution _____
Problem _____ Solution _____
Problem _____ Solution _____

16. If there is graphic material (graphs, maps, charts, etc.) included as part of the selection, list some facts you find in this material.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

17. Using the facts you found in the graphic material, can you make some conclusions about what the author might have wanted you (the reader) to learn from this material (the author's purpose for including it)?
I think the author wanted me to learn _____
_____
_____

18. If the selection you read did not have a title, what do you think a good title would be?
_____

19. If you know something about the topic (from other sources) which is related but is **not** found directly in the selection you read, write it below.
_____
_____

20. How do you think you or someone else could use the information in this selection in real life?
_____
_____
_____

21. Look back at #1. Which of your original predictions about the selection were correct? List them below:
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Comprehension Questionnaire (Nonfiction): Level III

Name _____ Date _____ Title _____

1. What was the topic of the selection you just read? _____
2. How many other things have you read about this same topic?
   a lot _____ some _____ not much _____ nothing _____
3. If you have already read something about this topic before, do you think what you already knew helped you understand this selection? Yes _____ No _____
4. **If you answered "yes" to #3**, can you explain how you used what you already knew about the topic to understand this selection? _____
   _____
5. **If you haven't read anything about this topic before**, did you know about it from other sources (TV, magazines, newspaper, etc.)? Yes _____ No _____
6. While you were reading, were you aware of places that gave you trouble? Yes ___ No___
7. What did you do when you came to places that gave you trouble?
   _____
8. Why do you think the author wrote this selection? _____
9. Did the author write the selection in a certain way to help you better understand his/her purpose? Explain. _____
10. Did knowing about different text patterns help you understand what you were reading?
    Yes _____ No _____
11. If you answered **yes** to #10, can you explain how you used the text pattern(s) in this selection to help you comprehend? _____
    _____
12. How would you rate the selection you just read in terms of how easy or how difficult ?
    Just right _____ A little difficult _____ Very difficult _____
13. How interesting was this selection to you? Very _____ Slightly ____ Boring _____
14. If you found this selection to be boring, did it affect your comprehension? _____

Teacher's Comments and Recommendations:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Nonfiction (Expository) Retell Checklist: Level III

Name _____ Date _____
Program _____ Title _____

0=None 1= Low Degree 2= Moderate Degree 3= High Degree

SCORE

1. Retelling included the most important ideas from the selection _____
2. Retelling included only those ideas found in the selection _____
3. Retelling was organized so as to be understandable _____
4. Retelling mentioned something about the author's purpose _____
5. Retelling demonstrated ability to distinguish the author's opinions from facts _____
6. Retelling indicated understanding of the pattern(s) of organization used _____
7. Retelling mentioned something about the relative usefulness of information _____
8. Retelling was fluent (student did not require prompting) _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

Questions to ask the Student

1. What did you do to help you remember the material for the retelling?
   _____
   _____
2. Were you able to use knowledge of the author's purpose to help you remember the text? Explain.
   _____
   _____
3. Were you able to use knowledge of text patterns to help you remember and comprehend the text? Explain.
   _____
   _____
4. Did the author's conclusions have adequate support in the text ?
   _____
   _____

Teacher Comments: _____
_____
_____

Lazar & Bean, 1991

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Developing Strategies for Answering Multiple Choice Questions: GED

General Teaching Procedures:

STEP 1

1. Give students direct instruction on the three question/answer patterns; go through GED practice books with them and categorize questions until you see that they are able to do this with relative ease.

2. **This takes some thought, so make certain you have gone through the questions you want to cover in class and are clear as to how you would classify them.**

3. Make certain you practice questions from all subject areas (the categories should generalize to all areas)

4. Below is a way of classifying question types; some questions may fit into more than one category (particularly Types 2 and 3), so definitions need to be broad enough and clear enough to accommodate all questions students will encounter.

   QUESTION and ANSWER PATTERNS

Type I: In the Text - Questions whose answers are stated directly in the text, usually in the same sentence or sentences close to one another

Type II: Put in Together - Questions whose answers are in the text, but not directly stated; the reader must take information from the text and put it together to formulate the answer

Type III: From Your Experience - Questions whose answer is not in the text but relates to material in the text; answers are formulated using previous experience with the topic (from personal experience, other reading, television, movies, magazine articles, newspapers, etc.) as well as information in the text.

5. As you can see, the question types relate to various levels of questioning generally found at the end of selections (literal, inferential, and application).

STEP 2

1. Begin to develop strategies for answering each question type.

2. Spend some time thinking aloud as you answer each question and write down the sequence of strategies you use, or pretend you are helping a student think through a question and write down everything you would say.

3. For each question, write down the strategies think you use.

4. In class, give each student a copy of these strategies and spend several class sessions using them with students allowing them to modify the strategies as they see the need.

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Categorizing Questions: Level III, GED

Name _____ _____

Look at each question, look at each category. Write the number of each question under the category into which it fits.

Date _____ Book _____ Pg. # _____

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

Date _____ Book _____ Pg. # _____

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

Date _____ Book _____ Pg. # _____

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

Date _____ Book _____ Pg. # _____

In the Text	Put it Together	From Your Experience

Number correct _____ **Need to work on (type)** _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991 (adapted from Vacca, R.T. & Vacca J.L. Content Area Reading)

AIM: Adult Informal Measures
Reading: Strategies for Answering Questions in Each Category

Category 1 strategy (In the Text)

What are the **key words** in this question that will help you answer it? _____
_____

I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____

I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____

Category 2 strategy (Put it Together)

What are the **key words** in this question that will help you answer it? _____
_____

What are the facts from this passage that I know relate to the question?

Fact 1 _____
Fact 2 _____
Fact 3 _____
Fact 4 _____

What are some conclusions I can draw from these facts?

Conclusion 1 _____
Conclusion 2 _____
Conclusion 3 _____
Conclusion 4 _____

Read each possible answer and check it with the facts and conclusions you drew.

I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____

I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____

What is the best answer? _____

Category 3 strategy (From your Experience)

What are the **key words** in this question that will help you answer it? _____
_____

List everything you already know about the word or topic being addressed.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Look at all of the answers and determine which answer best relates to what you know about the word or topic being addressed.

I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____
I think ___ (letter) could be correct because _____

I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____
I think I can eliminate _____ (letter) because _____

Lazar & Bean, 1991